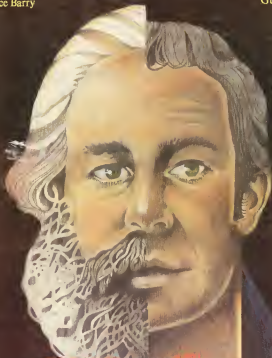


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Theatre

June 1978
Volume 2 No 11

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Australia

“? QUOTES & QUERIES ?”



QUEENSLAND QUERY

When a company announces a change in its published roster, here's there got to be more to it than Alan Edwards' statement to the press that he has found a "better and more pertinent" play than David Sorensen's *Along Richard in Patrick White's Big Toys?*

The announcement came shortly after a pretty large change around of members on the QTC board, and also, was a by almost coincidence?, not long after David Sorensen had made some rather radical statements in *The Australian* about what he thought ought to be done to Malcolm Fraser.

Sorensen's *King Richard* involves political reference between politicians and a criminal street leader. Patrick White's *Big Toys* involves a barrister and woman's union leader. Is the line further crossed from the professions of the new board members — or perhaps from Patrick White's own — or are they less disturbed by the statement than the corruption case?

Apparently Patrick White himself is not too happy that his play should be used as a proxy at the genre of national controversy, or that he should be second best to poet.

With Tom Newberry, the new manager for cultural affairs, already out to suppress four letter words (even in plays like *The Club*) it looks like a determination is needed to keep Queensland theatre unfractured from concerning the then even peaceful demonstrations are (being) in that case, aren't they?

NEW TRIBUTARY

ALEX MULLER

King Howard which will be having a week's run at Russell Street Theatre as part of the NEC's Tributary Productions, is my first attempt at writing for the stage. The play has a lot to do with the sad response of a strong and able person to a long wearing period of petty frustration. In *King's* case she comes out shouting. I didn't know for sure what was going to happen until I reached the last few lines of the play, but I felt with her every inch of the way. Sure, her decision to assassinate the King of Macedonia may seem bizarre and possibly insane. It didn't seem like that to me when I wrote it. It seemed the only appropriate decision for her to take.

King Howard grows, for me, and offers a degree of dramatic resolution to, themes that I've ruminated over for years in several unpublished novels. But whatever the case, *King's* asks more questions in the end than the attempts to answer — except the big one, of course, and the answers that owe for itself.

PLAYLAB PROMOTIONS

ROONEY LUMER, President, Playlab (Queensland Playwrights' Laboratory)

"Playlab has been in existence now for six years, it was started by Barbara Saltmarsh whom plays are constantly being performed by Little Theatre throughout Australia. The aim was to assist budding playwrights in their craft by assessing playscripts and, where there are the playwrights showed promise, arranging a rehearsal reading with experienced actors, a director and dramaturg to allow the playwright to work on the script under laboratory conditions. Playlab.

We have been working on two projects recently, in order to break the vicious circle of producers not presenting unpublished plays and publishers not printing unpublished plays. Firstly we are going into the provinces to sell two new plays — *The King* by Jackie McKenzie and *Placency* by Ron Hamilton — are being presented by Playlab at the Arts Theatre, Brisbane in May, directed by Joe MacCollum and Bob Pearson respectively.

And now we have launched Playlab Press, a new publishing house to serve the Australian playwright. Three volumes have been produced since April, *Freedom* by Lesma Bell, *The Season of a Marriage* by Helen Harris and *"Two One Act Plays"* which are *Placency*, and *Cherished*

by Paul Collins. We hope these quality playscripts at reasonable prices will reach the professional and amateur market as well as colleges, universities and schools, and children's theatres."

MARK AT OUR FEET

RON BLAIR writes about his play *Mark* which will be directed by Colin George for the South Australian Theatre Company at the Playhouse.

"A friend gave me a copy of Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station* for Christmas about 1971. I found the chapters on Karl Marx absolutely absorbing. Marx was a man of great strength and sense of purpose, no matter what dangers befell him, he could not be deflected. I read many books about and by him, and then put them all away. Seven years later I have written a play, about the man and his life in Scotland 1830-1. When I told Peter Dennis of my plan at the time Playwright's Conference he looked horrified. I knew what he was thinking. All I could say was "Not all our best plays are found right under our feet."

JUST LIKE THE OLD DAYS

CORALIE WOOD, Co-owner, Cannery Theatre Restaurant,

"We started four and a half years ago in Canberra with a production of *Dumbells* that was supposed to run for three weeks. We went on to run the *Holocaust Theatre Restaurant* which was unfortunately sold at the beginning of the year, and now we're at the *Black Theatre Restaurant* at the Park Royal Motor Inn.

But we just happened to find a place in Sydney which is now all our own, it's called *Stones* and used to be a milk bar and coffee lounge. (There must be some dark was first called) as in 1869 Every Sunday the Stones used to open it for entertainers. John Stones would play the piano and anyone who cared to could get up and sing. The Managing Director of the *Weekly Courier* was there the night was declared? All sorts of people started off there, it seems. Bill Shady occupied the stage, and there was Nellie Small, Tessa Hamilton, Ronald Jackson (you with the Australian Opera), Bobby Lamb, Johnny O'Connor, Bob Dyer and apparently even Frank Hild used to sing there as a little boy. Min Stoen's son is still alive.

Now we're putting on *Koussakia* Copert by Taki and John, starring Harriet Payne and Larry and Smart. It's just like the old vaudeville days."

Dear Sir,

I have bought every issue of *Theatre Australia* since its inception even when your subscription department failed to post my copy. However unless you publish a retraction and an apology for the article on auditioning at NIDA contained in your April 1978 issue, I will have to recall my subscription.

In April 1976, I wrote congratulating you on your proposal to provide a badly needed magazine for itself.

I think I can speak for NIDA, when I say that we wholeheartedly support the attempt of any qualified person endeavouring to disseminate prejudicial information as well as providing a critical coverage of contemporary Australian Theatre.

Theatre in Australia is still not on a healthy state and people in its various branches and activities need to support and treat each other if we are to see a genuinely vibrant theatre some night soon Australia.

Having these considerations, it is most disturbing that you should publish an article which drags students to such a gutter level and accuses the NIDA acting staff of allowing personal, sexual and political bias to override their artistic judgement.

Finally, the offending article has not only caused serious and pain here but has also caused the standing and motives of your magazine to be questioned—complete support I intend.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Company,

Lecturer/Instructor of Theatre,
The National Institute of Dramatic Art

APOLOGY

We are sorry to hear that our friends at NIDA did not respond to the light-hearted way intended in our article "But What About The Ingredients?" (April Issue) on their interview/questionnaire procedure. The impression of most readers was mainly those of the writer and were not intended to carry any malicious implications about any NIDA personnel or their abilities. The same goes for here for hopeful candidates which should only be rules as an opinion—well certainly not in any sense endorsed by EA.

Dear Sir,

The enclosed article is intended to counter the appalling misrepresentation contained in the *But What About The Ingredients?* (EA April 1978)

I am concerned always to improve the quality of our applicants meet the focus standards of our theatre will largely depend upon them. I hoped that you would support this and I am therefore amazed at your reasons for printing "But What?" come.

Students and staff at NIDA ask you to reduce the balance and attempt to repair some of the damage by printing the enclosed article in full.

Yours sincerely,

George Whaley,

Head of the Acting Course,

The National Institute of Dramatic Art

NIDA AUDITIONS

The unsuccessful applicant for the NIDA acting course, who wrote the article entitled *But What About The Ingredients?* (EA April, 1978) was one of seven hundred and fifty who were auditioned and interviewed for the twenty five places available. We are therefore in danger of making a parade of seven hundred crooks each year, and "But What's" disappointment is understandable. But for discussion of the facts is not.

The actual process is as follows: with some minor modifications in places other than Sydney.

1 Applicants are sent an application form which requires biographical details an outline of acting experience if any, work history in whatever area and a statement of personal objectives. A photograph and a CV outline the most adequately the facts as to return to NIDA.

2 The applicant is then contacted some weeks in advance of the time and place of the audition. Two prepared scenes are required and some suggested scenes are sent along with specific descriptions of the audition process.

3 An anonymous questionnaire which is used for statistical purposes, and is neither compulsory nor a part of the assessment is sent and applicants are asked to return it by the day of the audition. By this means we hope to gather data over a number of years, which will enable us to more effectively reach potential students, and improve the quality of our auditions.

4 Approximately thirty applicants are called to them on the appointed day. After a short introductory talk where the students are described in detail where we again outline our requirements and where applicants' questions are answered, a made up and rehearsed scene is conducted by NIDA students. This complete physical costume and drama game. The

objective is to relax the applicants and prepare them for work.

5 The applicants are divided into two groups, each with at least two members of the acting staff and one or two students. Group and individual appointments, movement exercises or sight reading may be required, and some time before lunch the first prepared scene is presented. Staff members may then suggest adjustments to the scene.

6 The two groups then change staff members and the same process is undertaken with the second prepared scene. Applicants then are not usually interviewed.

7 Some applicants may be sent for further work to include staff members, if they have shown reasonable ability during stages 5 and 6.

8 At any point during 5, 6 and 7 an applicant may be asked to return for a second day of audition. This is done if we need to examine that person more closely. He or she may be asked to prepare another scene for their second audition.

9 After seven weeks of this process in all capital cities of Australia we make the difficult decision as to the twenty four or so applicants who will be offered a place.

Many unsuccessful applicants ask for an audition report.

This type of system was established five or six years ago and is constantly being improved. Professional theatre workers are invited to attend and work with students which are quite rare and we believe fair and thorough. Most applicants seem to enjoy the process and many come back a second time.

We attempt to assess the applicant's potential in the areas of communication abilities both physical and vocal, imagination, temperament, objectives and motivation. These are the only criteria.

We must be sure that an applicant has something to say and at least the background of the theatre to say it. We want students who will not the delivery of a statement and demanding three year course and who will, on graduation, make a coherent contribution to the profession and the community.

And judging from our record, and the standard of our graduates, both the students and the course would seem to be reasonably successful.

George Whaley,

Head of the Acting Course,
National Institute of Dramatic Art.

Ray Stanley's

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS



When in America recently, Kenneth Branagh and Robert Gynn coincided with stars like Katherine Hepburn, Angela Lansbury and Carol Channing and as they all expressed desires to play return visits to the industry, it's quite on the cards that it is among them that Lansbury would come if the right comedy could be found she recently played the 11 in *The Day and the Night* and is scheduled to later go into Stephen Sondheim's latest musical, *weeney Todd*. Hepburn is keen to come here but first has to finish her filming of *The Corn is Green*. Channing of course is currently in the rehearsal of *Hello Dolly*.

Incidentally, coming on her next situation again — exactly as he did with *Gandhi* and *Bend Sinister* and *The Canterbury Tales* in London — Kenneth Branagh agreed *Frank Zappa* would be a big hit on Broadway when someone has the problem it would play. Now it has caused some of Broadway's biggest ever play but Branagh claims to receive public response to guide him as to whether a show will be a success or not. Michael and Tim Egan are currently involved in their annual search for possible attractions for Australia. Should we suggest everyone who saw *The Naked Civil Servant* on TV will be rushing to see what the magnificent Queen's Cup will be doing in the

stage appearances in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. Let's hope the ABC shows a repeat of the programme before Cingo arrived.

Currently *General Hospital*, with the real work has a long in Melbourne Theatre Company production, and numerous TV and film appearances, seems to be the actor in the first Australian production of *Signs in the Street* where some obviously has become most familiar with the general public. However, by the time this column is printed, the thought could well have reached to another member of that cast — and not far from the scenes. Not long those days, glad to be the engaged! Looks like a good idea for the Hooper Theatre Foundation. They are likely to present at Melbourne Playhouse in September Robert Archer in *The Nightingale* a production from Adelaide Stage Company about Helen Mirren. It will be decided by the Cherry Pavilion about from the Melbourne theatre scene and to played on afternoon nights in English and Italian. Helen Cherry in *Blue* could be coming down under soon. Apparently he turns there, but may have to.

One of plays mounted for the Old Time's second season this year almost looks like the first up for a commercial management. *Curfew at the Palace* which opens the season, used to be the good old stand by in England for top up and down the country that were in decline. Believe there is a big battle going on between Barry M. Miller's *Compendium* and the RASH system. After his Australian stage engagement, Liv Ullmann will be going into her first Broadway musical playing the title role in *Affairs* based on the play by John Van Drusen of *Remember Me*.

Tom Latham is playing the show-stopping role of Mrs. Henshaw in a *Red Cow* touring production at Arden in the States. Hilarious that one of Australia's brightest and most popular stars would be cast in the role

when it is of people from outside of the fact the *Australian Shakespeare Theatre* has an even costume being department. Understand it presents the original costumes and in the film *Phantom of the Opera* Jan's it about time an actor or actress was made a knight or dame for services to the Australian theatre? There's only one British actress (who's lived in the USA for most of her life) and Robert Helpmann who got a baronet. So long, long Australian audiences will always think to see a noted actor or actress, right it not give a much needed boost to her theatre here if a few such honours were allowed again? But would it cause too much bad feeling between fellow citizens?

One of Britain's leading dramatic review writers Peter Myers died recently at the age of fifty four. Peter may recall he was and lived in 1958 for the Australian version of his *For Amateurs Only* review, which is also devoted later to reviews for *The Melbourne Australian Show*, and was previous producer at A.T.O.T.

Understand the cast of *The Twelfth and the First Act* could have appeared in their last show at London last March but for the sudden co-operation of the Victorian Arts Council. The cast were told there was a West End theatre available that asked to go over immediately. However they were under contract to the V.A.C. in their Victorian country towns. They ended to be temporarily released from their contract, promising faithfully to take a up again immediately as soon as London when their previous would naturally be over. Hence the V.A.C. cancelled first in its refusal. The country was that place did only so to be honest — mostly through poor publicity on the V.A.C.'s part apparently — and in some cases had working conditions. Now the Twelfth can set dressing on another London that is hopefully for August when their Adelaide season



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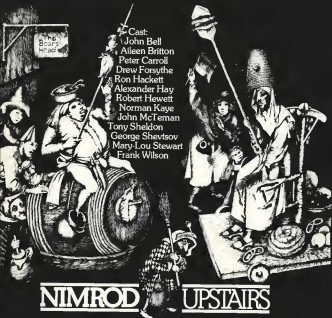
William Shakespeare

director/Richard Wherrett

designer/Tom Lingwood

Cast:

John Bell
Aileen Britton
Peter Carroll
Drew Forsythe
Ron Hackett
Alexander Hay
Robert Hewett
Norman Kaye
John McTernan
Tony Sheldon
George Shevtsov
Mary-Lou Stewart
Frank Wilson



DESIGNING MINDS

THE DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PERFORMING ARTS was last year's reformulator having been in abeyance for some time. The Association aims to promote and protect the role of the Designer in theatre, television and film and to heighten both professional and public appreciation of their work. It is based in Sydney with a committee of ten headed by Anna Fraser as President.

The current membership comprises sixty designers from all around Australia.

Thirty members will show their work at the "Designing Minds" exhibition. It was officially opened on Friday, 26th April at 6.30 p.m. by Mr Robin Leverage, O.B.E., former Artistic Director of the Old Tote Theatre Company. On display also were showman's of work from William Cornsable, Barry Kay, Kenneth Russell, the late Lucien Scudell and Miss Desmond Downing, past President of the Association, who died soon after completing the design for the A.B.C.'s television production of *Ben Hur*.

For further information please contact Anna Cornsable, Administrator on 44 6112 or 261111 Ext. 211.

Designing Minds is an exhibition of film, theatre and television design at Fishburn Hall, Sydney Opera House, 6th April to 11th May, 1978.



D.A.P.A. "Designing Minds" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 16. Robin Leverage, (right) centre) opens exhibition in front of 150 people from the Theatre, TV and Film Industry.



D.A.P.A. "Designing Minds" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 16. Anna Fraser, Exhibitor.



D.A.P.A. "Designing Minds" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 16. Yvonne Hinchey, Designer for Australian Opera, City of Melbourne.



D.A.P.A. "Dressing Moods" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 78



D.A.P.A. "Dressing Moods" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 78
Carol Patterson Costume Designs for A.B.C. New Wolf



D.A.P.A. "Dressing Moods" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 78
Bill Patterson Exhibition



D.A.P.A. "Dressing Moods" Exhibition, Sydney Opera House, April 78

And now —
a word from
the villain....

Bruce Barry

talks to Barry Eaton

Sydney's Music Hall Theatre Restaurant has had a proud tradition of top villains since its opening. Barry Clayton, Alfie Barry and more recently Alfred Sander are names that spring to mind. Bruce Barry now joins the list for the new production, *Crushed by Desire*.

Not that this is Bruce's first venture into Music Hall type villains. In 1962 he starred in the Melbourne production of *Face of the Window*. That was also for George Miller, the owner of the Music Hall.

Mr Barry is quite often the most satisfactory role for an actor to play. With appearances at the theatre in TV series like *Manabout*, *Masters*, *Division Four* and *Byron*, Bruce Barry is no stranger to audiences.

"Even my musical comedy parts have led along these lines," he says. "Neddy Arrington in *Amey-Dee* even Frank Butler in *Amey-Dee*. Four Gals is an odd kind of modern opera. He is a character. In *President Promote* I was virtually a villain. Not an exaggerated one, a

very understandable human being, but a villain nonetheless." The part of Dickinson in 1976 was said then to be mould.

Bruce of course has played the hero on several occasions. Frederick in *A Little Night Music* is one of his favourite memories. But even Frederick had his nasty moments.

His interview series *The Spider* was a classic case of the anti-hero character.

"I never forget my mother writing to me and saying, at last you are on the right side of the law. I am so pleased you will be showing a different side of yourself, as I was so disappointed whenever you turned up as a villain."

And what happened?

"Well, the so-called hero was far more vicious, far more aggressive than any of the villains I'd ever played in past years or other series."

But his mother still loves him.

Prior to rehearsals at the Music Hall, Bruce headed off overseas for his first trip out of Australia. He had a marvellous voyage (went through London and then on to the South of France for some time). After this, head still in the clouds for a state still perhaps, he arrived back in Sydney to find rehearsals had started a week early. Urgent messages had been flying around Europe, but Bruce had heard nothing.

"I was having such a marvellous time. It's not over. I would have come back anyway," he mused.

Ignored what he thought.

When Bruce did return, it was to a rehearsal where he was not only a week behind the rest of

the cast, but having communication difficulties with director Michael Reddy.

"I was nervous and but wasn't and we had great difficulty getting it together. I tried to throw food at him as a show-out, but I just didn't work. So I had to go back in the second or third week of rehearsals and start again, while all the others were working on it was the hardest bloody thing I have ever done."

Things did come together though and Bruce has settled in for the traditional twelve months run that Music Hall productions enjoy.

The show underway, Bruce Barry can now devote more time to contemplating his future, a subject of concern lately. He is becoming increasingly discontent with his present lot and considering several alternatives....

"Acting is the last link in the creative process. I suppose I am growing more and more dissatisfied with being the last link. I would like to move up to directing and writing."

Would he just up and go altogether in the event?

"Except for film work, yes. In film there is a discipline which is denied you in the theatre."

The recent trip to London has also had its effect. He was about to set off overseas when *Amey-Dee* came along. Some time the flow of work has kept him in Australia. But the prospect of working in London is appealing now and more now.

1978 could well be a big year in the life of Bruce Barry.

Facing these two possibilities is a also decorated by an alternative lifestyle.

But that's another story.

" IF THE FRONTIERS OF BRISBANE DRAMA ARE GOING
TO BE EXTENDED IT'S IN LA BOITE'S LITTLE
SPACE THAT IT WILL HAPPEN. "

BARRY OAKLEY - NATIONAL TIMES - FEBRUARY 13 - 19, 1978



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ALTERNATIVE ADELAIDE

Frank Ford

Frank Ford started to live active Australia in 1973 after years of working overseas in the theatres of New York and other foreign cities, to take up a Drama Lectureship at Adelaide CAE. He is currently the Director of the Icon Theatre Company, and was the founding Chairman of the Association of Community Theatres.

For a city with a comparatively small population, Adelaide boasts an extraordinary number of theatre companies. Apart from the fully professional, state subsidised South Australian Theatre Company, there are over forty smaller organisations under the umbrella of the Association of Community Theatres — a broad and colourful spectrum recently described as alternative, amateur, semi-professional, alternate, professional, experimental, fringe or community theatre — not to mention several excellent children's and youth or education groups. All these adjectives apply, and occasionally overlap, and these quality — by whatever standards you choose to measure it — more drastically. All serve useful purposes, but amongst them are approximately six groups possessing a high degree of the theatre skills and demonstrating a solid commitment. These groups serve as training grounds, and occasional testing places, for the professionals in the industry, and in a few cases, operate as full-time professional companies, even if payment has to be on a salaried or payment-deferred basis. And Adelaide also boasts — proudly — a number of actors who have been encouraged by, or have grown up with, these companies, and who are now at training schools and international reputations.

Despite this thriving training ground, Adelaide has not yet thrown up a small professional company to compete with Sydney's Nimrod or Melbourne's APG. Paradoxically, it might be because of this healthy environment rather than despite it, that the long-awaited second coming has failed to eventuate. History is tragically short, but activity is furious and creative voices many, and, coupled with sporadic film and commercial work, tends to partially define the on-leave as set up a lightly second-hand second professional company, after all, such a company could only provide brilliant work for a handful, and there is always the dreaded spectre of over-indebtedness and

creative reflection. Which leads us to the \$64 question — it would cost plenty more than that! — Is a second company necessary at this time?

An arbitrary list of Adelaide's alternative companies must include the South Australian Creative Workshops, The Adelaide Theatre Group, La Mama, the G, Icon, the University Theatre Guild, Globe, the Stage Company and Troop. Even then it is hard to draw the line, one might mention the new Adelaide Company producing cabaret theatre in the Adelaide Hills, or St Jude's Players with years of making its new plays, or the TIC team with their high standards of writing and performance. Of the above list, the Stage Company and Troop have definite plans to go fully professional, and it could be that one or both of these will provide the pre-emptive to the SAIC. The artists' success in the years back up their claims, but only marginally ahead of the rest of the field.

South Australian Creative Workshops, under the guidance of its Director/Founder Maureen Christmas, has produced uncountable successful plays, and launched many good performers during its seven years of operation, despite the lack of a permanent base. Their work as an ensemble is inspired towards radical innovation, in both content and presentation. They now have a professional wing, the Company Arts Team (C.A.T.), a mobile unit producing TIC and related work,

which employs Director Christmas and several other prize winners from the ensemble.

The Adelaide Theatre Group, based in the delightful North Adelaide wing of the Sturtian Theatre, could arguably be called the number one training ground for Adelaide's theatre professionals. Len Depman, Don Barker, William Ayle and countless others gained their amateur experience here, some as exceptions in 1946. It has never had them to being a professional group, but has always striven for the highest standards in such productions, often producing "safe" theatre, but taking the occasional commercially possible. For many years, it represented the only viable competition to the SAIC.

La Mama, a pearl in the rather deeply oiled of the Western inner suburbs, seems inseparable from its dynamic, transient founder, Director Brian Knox. After twenty years of fermenting in Adelaide theatre, Christmas (born Brown) converted a Crawford Lane cellar into a theatre which now only forms part of a multi-complex with The Shed over the road, and even a foyer gallery. La Mama's work involves several good-will amateur plays — Pinau, Becker, Tennessee Williams — rules are taken, but not so often as to jeopardise the existence of the theatre, which has survived without so much as a month of subsidy for five productive years. There is also a strong commitment to teaching, through its workshops. It's a year in and out proposition, but it's there.



Wayne Anthony in *Ugly*

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Alto as a long-term prestigious venue in the Q Theatre in the city's Carrington Street. Founded in 1979 by Actress/Director/Playwright Beryl Quin, who now takes a long-range interest in the theatre as a writing career, it is fair to say that the Q has done more than any other company to encourage young actors and new plays. Week after week, with the next play ready to go when the previous season ends.

The昆 Theatre Company is an alternative theatre organisation of highly qualified specialists. Formed in late 1979 by director Frank Ford and designer Mels Parris, both with considerable previous experience, the management also included musical director Graham Gully, late of the Cordoba in the UK, and technical director Mikiel Micallef, a local professional. Recently, they have used a variety of venues, presenting mainly new plays adapted and made to fit the space.

The University Theatre Guild, mainly a post graduate campus group, has reduced its students and membership over a long and disappointed career to include the off-campus public in the end vision. Before the expansion of the SATC, it was the prestige company in the state, presenting the (then) controversial Patrick White plays. It now has a permanent ensemble under the energetic direction of professional Jan Wile. Blended with access to two university theatres, an opportunity to train performers and technicians is immense.

Globe, described after their first production as 'the ultimate of alternative theatre in Adelaide', took an innovative tack, with the lowest possible admission prices, despite no attempt as yet to attract subsidy. A loosely structured collective around Flinders drama graduate Steve Brown works on a variety of unusual venues, and in 1987 presented two Australian premieres: *Woman's Killing Game* and *Secret Spies: Three were Gents in Three Days*. They also work in TIE.

The most recent addition is the Stage Company, formed last year largely on the initiative of its SATC assistant director Brian Robinson, with the express intention of working as professionals. A new performing collective is set up to produce short shows, only experienced amateur trained actors may participate, and a full-time commitment is demanded. Assured by only marginal state funding, and weekly budgeting for adequacy rather than pocket money, Stage pulled off a daring and highly commendable first season: three new plays by Adelaide writers Rob George and Ken Ross. The houses, at the Sheridan Theatre, only increased up to the cautious minimum, but the notion went superbly. Stage is now in a race to examine the funding situation and plan its next bracket of works later in the year.

Though, formed in 1976 by director/writer/producer David Alto and actor/director Keith Gallucci (until its wings as a number of ad hoc flotillas before creating its own, the Red Shed, in a garage behind a city

bookshop). Then they produced the *Midnighter* but, *If I Ever Get Back* and *Agnes: A Play*, based on the writings of D H Lawrence in Australia. Gallucci starred in Allen's tight script, and Thrope's reputation was made. Since then they have continued to produce mainly new works in the Shed — no retirement of Melbourne's La Morte, circa 1980 — culminating with the Critics' Circle Award. In 1979, they plan to have a full-time professional cast, backed up by collectively paid actors in the wider ensemble.

Since its inception in 1971, the Association of Contemporary Theatres, (ACT), has been the co-ordinating body for these and many other groups. With only a part-time administrator under an elected honorary committee, ACT has housed between its members as well as with the media and funding bodies to help improve communication, resource sharing, standards and bank-benefits of the group. Until recently, the only subsidy met with by many of these was the small sum that ACT was able to derive from its hard won grants as a collective entity. ACT has showcased 16 groups and performed on two occasions at The Space at the Festival Centre, a flexible theatre which has caused the Festival Centre Trust many headaches as its correct method of use, it provides a central, useful venue for the showcase concept. ACT has also welcomed an Almost Free Season at the University Lark Theatre, in display can only performance and directors, but also new writing, concept houses saw five productions with no admission charge — donations only. This was an extension of the Writers' Workshop, rehearsed readings of new plays, which is an ongoing activity.

In fact, it is the provincial new works and new writers which has been the most pleasing aspect of the Adelaide Theatre explosion of the 1970s. An ACT Writers' Workshop was the first vehicle for a Ken Ross play, another fine play was produced through ACT in the Space last year, and since then, its works have not huge success with the Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney's Jase Ross, and in Queensland. Another ACT group — Gade — produced the first Ross Spies play, and the subsequent micro-minimal career of that Adelaide playwright needs no further elaboration. But Allen's *Gone with Alamy* will feature on the MTC's programme this year, after its premiere in our Almost Free Season, and his work on Lawrence is under consideration by Trans- Television. For the second year running, Malcolm Parnell will be represented in Workshop at the National Playwrights' Conference, but in his home state, only the alternative groups have produced his work. The task of discovering, and more importantly, developing new writers seems to have been left to the alternative groups and their umbrella organisation, ACT. Following the Thrope production, the SATC accepted the rights to *If I Ever Get Back* — but then fell through due to copyright problems. The

SATC commissioned a script from Rob George, but *Three Agents* has dropped a short one public reading. The play was developed by the Stage Company to become a critical success during the 1980 Festival. This same year the SATC had an option on Spies: *Three Were Gents* but for their hope lost. ACT finally premiered the play in the Almost Free Season, by which time Spies was on its way to the London opening of Benjamin Franklin. The MTC produced Ken Ross' *Breaker Moment*, and will produce the Allen play, it seems that Adelaide writers must take their work straight from their bases of operation in the ultimate theatre to the other states and thence, possibly, overseas. The local state company, despite its active playwriting service, seems unconsciously back-sliding the backward role.

The question of government funding is inescapable in these alternative times, the state did not a decade some years ago by heavily subsidising a second professional company at Theatre 52, possibly the countermeasures before of that measure is behind the reality of both time and companies to try a repeat of the experiment. That collapse, however, occurred at a time before the theatrical apogee which has depleted our pool of expertise and public awareness.

Any government's role policy is enfolded in the way it identifies its funds — no legislation can directly control the funding of creative personnel. In South Australia, the SATC and State Opera have separate links in the Budget, in other words, their money runs straight through an open channel rather than filtering through the Arts Development Division which administers the funding for 'the rest' — the alternative theatre. The SATC receives \$400,000, while the sum total for the myriad of others in 1979/80 was about \$28,000. This level of discrepancy can prove widely departing to the professionals and committed non-professionals in alternative theatre, all of whom, in greater or lesser degree, are on the borderline financially that 'waving' stop or risky initiative can spell doom.

Clearly, therefore, funds to support a second professional company cannot come from that shallow pool in which the demonstrably harmful alternative companies float, in fact, that pool needs to be deepened to enable them to not only maintain the status quo, but take a few more risks to uncover more talents which are surely being put below the surface. Private support is a slight probability at best — at least, in sufficient degree it seems doubtful that the government will allocate a portion of the SATC's funding for the purpose of a new company.

An event structure of the SATC plus a second company and the existing ACT groups would be exciting indeed. But if this proves impossible, we can still be happy with the twelfth millennium that already exists in the heavily propped Adelaide alternative theatre.

Douglas Flintoff asks whether the "subsidy spiral" is turning our subsidised theatres into mere try-out venues for commercial shows.



SUBSIDY AND COMMERCIALISM

Ever since the outstanding success of *Summer of the 17th Doll* over twenty years ago there has been an entrepreneurial model for subsidised or publicly subsidised theatre organisations. Companies have laboured under the misapprehension that a show will reach the widest or largest audience, or will contribute most to Australian culture, if it is presented on a single large scale all as commercial production. The result has been an increasing emphasis on commercial values in our subsidised theatres and, apparently, an increasing neglect of artistic ones. It is a pity just for glossy progress, but there are slowness signs.

#The creeping commercialism is seen at every level of production in the major and second string companies. An example is the Nimrod Theatre — for some years now Sydney's most exciting company, with a consistently high standard of production of always interesting plays. Recently Nimrod has been "going commercial" with an aggression dreadful to contemplate. They now do revivals, pre-planned transfers to commercial theatres, interstate tours of their best hits — all worthy activities expanding their audiences and bringing culture within reach of the masses etc — but dangerous. Dangerous because this sort of thinking can very easily tip over into a preoccupation with turns on seats, to the detriment of quality and theatrical excitement. #

Paul Ha and John Hall furthermore have a personal financial stake in *The Club*. They take a percentage of its profits, as does Richard Wharmby for *The Illusionist* of *Berkeley Franklin*. Again this is not so bad as it still has it is a sign of commercial values encroaching on the balanced domain of Art. These people have seldom paid out of the public purse. A crop of the winners of these successful shows may be a cheap way for the public to reward them for their successes, but it surely also cannot help encouraging them to be on the lookout for commercial lots. It gives them a raised interest beyond their artistic concerns, and although we may presumably only on the parity of these chosen areas had previous.

The pre-planned transfer of *The Club* is a similar sign. It was booked onto the Theatre Royal in Sydney, and for its tour, before a record at Nimrod Upriver. Why bother with the preliminary success in the subsidised theatre? If it is definitely going to succeed why not put it straight into commercial production and spend the public money on something more adventurous? Any subsidised theatre is to become merely a try-out venue for purely commercial activities? If so then this is government aid to an industry — an artistic overproduction luxury — rather than a public expression of support for the art.

A more blatant and blatantly cynical example is Walter Morley's recent production of *Don Fish Sea and I* at the Melbourne Theatre Company. I do not know the financial details of the agreement between Morley and the MTC but I would like to. On the surface it seems as if Morley is getting not only a free try-out for a production he will tour, but the revenues of the MTC to mount the production in the first place.

On the other side of the coin — from the point of view of the generosity or solely commercial organisations — we find the government refusing to give even urgent short-term assistance to an ailing ICA's. One of the main reasons for the performing arts to come

within the terms of reference of the Industries Assistance Commission was the feeling among commercial companies that subsidised companies were providing unfair competition. And from the IAC report it seems they found this feeling to be completely justified. Subsidy has become government protection for an ailing industry — unfairly distributed in that.

It is partly the commercial theatres, back of course. Why don't they use good commercial theatres like John Hall or good commercial writers like David Williamson? It's getting so that the only difference as product is that the commercial theatres do overseas stuff and the subsidised theatres remain local.

I have singled out a couple of specific examples, but this is not because they are the only ones. The S.A.T.C. does productions of American musicals — to get the audience into the theatre (although to do them unless they never had a hope of making money out of show. Get Your Gals — the theatre is simply too small and the show was too big). The Old Tote employs a director of shows largely, it seems, on the basis of his previous commercial success. All subsidised theatres are caught in what has been called the "subsidy spiral". To maintain or increase their subsidy they have to maintain or increase their audience, but they are under pressure not to fail, to be cautious and to appeal to as many tastes as possible. The Tote and the MTC, for example, occasionally get very proud of playing to nearly empty houses, but they are attracting no new people to the theatre, nor presenting any new material to the old crowd who attend. They have simply succeeded in filling seats from the very "market" they appeal to, and so justifying, numerically, next year's subsidy.

One of the IAC's chief complaints was that no subsidised theatre submitted arguments for the general cultural, financially unaccountable benefits for the community that theatre is still sometimes thought to have.

Let us hope that was not because our subsidised theatres don't believe in them.

Paul Iles, manager of Nimrod, argues that "commercial" and "subsidised" theatre are not antithetical: that "our theatres should be applauded when they marry art with business".

THE PROFITABLE STAGE

At a time when membered artists' policies and financial crises periodically assault the columns of *Theatre Australia*, Douglas Finstoff tries to put the Nimrod in the frame for success on both fronts. With the usual characteristic early Australian politeness that he turned up the *Truth's* failures in an April article, he now takes an arbitrary bait as a prize fighter. Such correspondence wants to grow on the bush.

Profitability has never been the sole way to judge a theatre's success. The pursuit of the profit motive has meant the lingering death of nearly every commercial manager in Australia, but Nimrod has been successful because it does not have to make a profit.

income from subsidiary activity. Commercial transfers of Nimrod are a by-line, not a goal.**

Nimrod has benefited largely from costs and transfers in the last two years. Without the success of *The Education of Benjamin Franklin* and *The Club* we would either be out of business or now be paying actors and staff bumper wages. Without a \$14,000 profit from *Benjamin* the Company would have turned in 1977 surplus of \$25,000 (not a loss of \$40,700). It is patently ludicrous for Mr Finstoff to imply that prudent artistic management does not belong in the ballroom domain of art, is he the man of speedily who is bankrupting our theatres?

The article states that Iles is right and I feel a personal stake in *The Club* by taking a percentage of profits — as though any man in our profession could in instant every director in subsidised theatre whose work transfers gets a percentage. Equity, who heads directors themselves they should. A three year old standard agreement rules a benefit to actors 1% and 3 per cent of gross box office receipts. Similar terms exist in the United States. In 1975 we saw the percentage is negotiated with the board of directors and he was paid 1% per cent which amounted to \$2,100 on the transfer of *The Club*. Likewise *Whitcomb on Benjamin Franklin* hardly a killing, especially when they are not paid a salary of \$15,000 with no expense account. Last, that a project officer at the Australia Council and less than half the salary of the deputy head of the Film and Television School Foundation, Finstoff is wrong about my deal. I receive no percentage payments whatsoever and am employed in the same basic salary as the three artistic directors.

In that article the mistake is to regard "commercial" and "subsidised" theatre as antithetical. There is a strong commercial element in all those whose depend on the sale of tickets in the public. We assume that there is no commercial pressure on a subsidised theatre and that commercial managers are motivated solely by profit passion. To be really free from commercial pressure the subsidised theatre must be funded very very highly.

I would like to see more subsidy in commercial theatre. Conversely, Finstoff makes no reference to the Education Theatre Trust. Had Nimrod made a loss with *The Club* and



half would have been borne by the Trust, as employees. In turn they received half of any profit. The rules of transferring *The Club* to the Theatre Royal were generous, with a weekly gross-out of \$10,000. About 18 per cent of box office (always paid in percentage payments 10 per cent in the auditor 1% per cent in the director, 11% per cent in the theatre for rental two took the risk, not the Royal). There was usually another \$1500 for the company, \$7000 for gallery, \$2000 for theatre staff, electricity and running charges. We began the production at Nimrod in order to re-engage material and stage costs. The transfer was pre-planned because we knew of the MTC's success with the original production — an eighteen week season at Russell House Theatre. The transfer of *Benjamin Franklin* was not — because the personal was unknown.

The long series of Australian commercial enterprises rarely motivates them to leave our own Australian plays. It was basic solution in the Trust assuming across the board in the hope that they may make an overall profit which can be put back into production. In particular the Trust should be able to encourage new young producers and the presentation of work which might not come on the face of it to be "commercial".

This is their involvement with Wilson Morley's *Ex-Clubs*, *Fish and Chips* — an ambitious play to a 100,000 theatre if ever there was one. The Trust is wrong totally for that. Hooper's *On the whole* that judgement are improving after the wake of imported packages. I cannot really say they have made an over-ought reduction in the state of commercial theatre, which I think is very bad anyway but it's a start.

Our theatres should be applauded when they marry art with business. The Australia Council does not produce success and profit. It is delighted for the *Franklin* Ballet to have success.

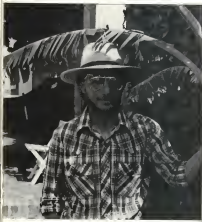
All things considered, the pit is not looking so badly. In that article Mr Finstoff surely tries to sit on the ground from under me but "We have been looking for too long

Subsidised theatre companies are injecting a new stimulus to the commercial houses. In the last two years Sydney's Theatre Royal has hosted the *Old Tote's Habes Corpus*, *Maman Street's Tarantula*, the Dance Company's *Peggy*, MTC's *Kid Sakes* and *Diva*, *Fish*, and Nimrod's *The Club*. One third of all their productions.

The article suggests that the interests of the taxpayer are not being well served by companies aiming at city transfers and that the subsidies from the Australia Council and state governments should not be mixed with the money contributed by commercial managers towards the cost of production. But there is no doubt that subsidised theatre audiences are seeing better productions than they would do without the profits of the market place. While grants in Australia remain at such a low ratio to earned income, compared to the European theatres with a higher safety margin, non-profit theatre must look to supplementing its

Alex Buzo celebrates ten years of
Kirsten Blanch talks to him about

ORGANISED NICENESS



Alex Buzo. Photo: Jon Lewis

Critics are often hunting around for various levels of meaning in your plays. Was Makassar first one critic complained because you ignored the destiny between East and West, another said those tensions were what the play was all about. When I asked what your intentions had been you said you didn't know because you write from images. Could you tell me more about that?

Well, the plays arise out of an image, not a theme. I don't sit down and decide I'm going to write about this or that. *Combe Landdowne* began when I met a couple who were then living downstate from us. He was four inches shorter than she. I saw them hugging one day and it struck me that that was what he sought to, he was what she'd settled for. The play grew out of that.

That play was full of images. It's set on a peninsula, the first thing you see when the curtain opens is broken steel shells on stage, there's a tree growing through the roof. I suppose all these say something about Combe.

Critics called the play a bitter satire on the lap about Palm Beach set. I don't even know if there is a Set. My aunt Vera and Bob Ellis live at Palm Beach, but I can't imagine what sort of Set could accommodate both of them. If I did want to write about the Palm Beach Set I'd do a long article for *The National Times*, not write a play.

I'm less clear about *Makassar Reef* because it's still too recent but there was an image of a wharf and an old ruin. In *Makassar* I came across that exact same and it confirmed my idea for the play.

But, of course, there's more to a play

than strung together a set of images. How do your plays develop from that initial image/idea?

It's a process that takes two or three years. I fill up note books with all sorts of things. Bits of plot, images, characters, scraps of dialogue. I make certain decisions about the directions the play will go, but I'm not conscious of trying to get any sort of message across. If one does emerge, it's as a spin off. When I actually come to write the play I read through the notes, and the writing itself takes only two or three weeks.

Everything you've written is within the conventional theatre format. Katherine Deane has been talking about the art theatre of Japan which are purposely impersonal and flexible, and so encourage different kinds of play-seeing. Are you interested in other forms of theatre?

My plays are full of humanist propaganda. Like secret agent, Maxwell Smart, I'm aligned with the forces of goodness. The traditional actor-audience relationship seems to be the most human form of theatre: the actor playing characters and the audience watching, with no partial position in the event sense.

Other kinds of theatre are terrific for propaganda, but often verge on mindlessness and sterility. In the stories they told traditional theatre was on the way out, but it's strangerer than ever. You don't mean I won't continue to experiment.

When you look back over the last ten years what strikes you about the plays you've written?

The early plays are more negative than I would write now, more pessimistic. They were humanist protests against what seemed wrong. Now I seem to be more interested in a humanistic sense of what's good. Also, when I first started I was very influenced by the theme of the absurd. *Altered* is a particular example of that. In later plays the images are more integrated into the background. You don't get the same surreal juxtaposition. *Combe Landdowne* is chockablock with images, but the characters respond realistically.

Surrealism is great for showing chaos. I've never, for example, seen a poster carried painting. You can't see it by showing optimism. My plays are realistic, not catastrophic. I enjoy saturation in effects but we no point in it for myself. For me plays have to stimulate the imagination and rebellion doesn't do that.

Surrealism is great for showing chaos

Playwrighting this year. is work then and now.



MTC production of *Carole Lombard Says No*, 1974 with Sandy Gore and Fred Fawcett. Photo: Bob Lawton.

I've never, for example, seen a positive sexual pairing. You can't use it for showing optimism. My plays are realistic, not naturalistic. I enjoy naturalism in actors, but see no point in it for myself. For my plays have to stimulate the imagination and naturalism doesn't do that.

What I write is in no sense autobiographical. If it's about anything, it's about the bonds between people, but I find psychology boring.

There does seem to have been a fairly constant chatterbox from Ahmed to Weeks Brown who is fairly equal to his demands for perfection. When you get a character like that it creates dramatic problems for people around them.

You have used the word "humanist" several times. What do you mean by humanist?

Organised scepticism.

You have mentioned that people are badly educated about plays. That they don't know how to read them. Could you expand on that?

I was talking in particular about theatre critics, especially those with single stage IQs. They can't get beyond bits of snuff horn pedantry out of the files. The 1850s. One said about *Macassar Reef* that the audience was left wondering if they were watching farce, comedy or drama. The audience wasn't wondering anything. It was watching a play. All those criticisms went out the window thirty years ago when black comedy came in.

Martelle Towers, for example, took a convention and reversed it. It begins as farce — doors open and slam, people's identities are mixed up, there's lots of confusion. People meet each other who shouldn't meet each other. Like the wife



Martelle's suit for Martelle Towers, 1976. Photo: Mike O'Brien.



Arma Stage, Washington's production of *Tom*, directed by Alan Schneider, 1971. Photo: Jon B. Man.

and mistress. Then it begins to wind down and goes into comedy then drama.

The critics say you can't play around with styles. Well, I did. And they don't relate what's happening on stage with what the audience is feeling. If it's not working, the coughing and sneezing will start and you can feel it in the air. If it's good you can have four hundred people with the end of one will cough. *Martelle Towers* went down well with audiences, so they should relate their theories about structure to this like that.

Have the productions of your plays done decent justice?

Yes, mostly. Particularly those at the Melbourne Theatre Company and Manned in Sydney. We understand each other. There have been some bad productions. *Revised* seems to have suffered most. It's been butchered more often than any of the others. Perhaps it's a difficult play to produce. *The Front Room Sign* is a bit of an ultimate career, too, though when it works it looks good.

Why do you think you have survived these ten years when many playwrights periodically of the fifties have stopped writing or left the country?

The reason the playwrights who began in the 1940s are still around to celebrate their tenth anniversary is that they were better educated and didn't take to heart the comments made by management, critics, police, the RSL, the CWA, psychologists, expatriates, drinking mates, parents, hippies or Sir Frank Pickers. If I'd taken notice of any of those I would have left the country after *Norm And Ahmed*. Now there are some good new writers coming up like Scott J. Spence, Jenny Compton and Lynn Neume. They won't be forgotten away either.

Your last play's just forever. I suppose?

I'm afraid so, I love Indonesia, it's colour and it's potentism. The play's about oppressed people trying to find their past so they can go on. They grope each other metaphorically. This is all beautifully done in *Arma Stage's* production with the Melbourne Theatre Company, and performed by several actors who've made my work look good many times before — Monica Magagna, Max. Cohen, Sandy Gore and Gerry Magara. They're able to make the sometimes outrageous language in their minds and go ahead with their characterisation. Does that sound like a play?

For how that's OK. What are you filling notebooks with now. What ideas and images are you working on?

I'm looking for it. I've got three plays on the boil.

Am not around water?

Absolutely. It's the only way to cure hydrophobia.

International

Michael Morley

Polarities in German productions.

The participation of director and artist in a constant re-examination of the function and direction of the theatre has long been an established feature of the German scene. During the last three years the participants in the debate have drawn up balance sheets on which such "opposed" values as on the one hand, uniformism, show, traditional, classic, and director as custodian and, on the other, politeness, demonstration, ironic games and collectivism are played off against each other. Of course the discussion is hardly typical of Germany alone. But to discuss the topic of theatre which can be seen as linked with, and resulting from the current debate, I should like to concentrate on four productions, all staged in Berlin.

The new theatre in both parts of Germany which now seems closest to the comfortable, unambitious atmosphere of London's National Theatre is the Berliner Ensemble in East Berlin. What is now being done there in the name of Saint Bertolt Brecht, prophet of East German socialism (father of the future and saviour of the theatre is a case study of biography as it almost happened. To commemorate the eighth anniversary of Brecht's birth, Manfred Wehner, the new guardian of the Brecht heritage (after yet another police indictment, regard a production of the 1958 version of *Galileo* by him, Brecht's view of the historical figure is more positive than in his last attempts to make of him the pagan star of the original sin of science

He is now in a corner, almost noble martyr after the trials an opponent who knows what

is how and when to walk back. Given the current situation in the GDR, where the question of rights and wrongs speaking out and suffering the consequences is as everybody needs one might have hoped for some sort of parallel — however discreetly drawn — with the poetist. Not a bit of it. The play was withdrawn from the moment one walked into the theatre and stood against an the programme as on the tables of the law. "Only as much truth as we can prevail on will prevail the victory of reason can only be the victory of the unreasonable" Brecht's fondness for simple aphorisms was always apt to slide into an addiction to neatly tailored banalities. This production was a further, unfortunately painful, proof of this, as well as of the familiar "topical" devices, grey stage grey costumes, head white lights, the playing area divided into two sections by a semi-visible, gaily-coloured upstage wall with two open stairways running down into the forestage where most of the action was focused. All very neat, very precise and as sterile as a dressing room in which not even corpses had conditioned quivers are presented for our examination.

Just as the play heralds a new age in science and society, the production was catered to the taste for the company itself. It was to be serious, committed, true to Brecht's aims, a demonstration of the relevance of the theatre of the scientific age. It was none of these. Far more successful was the Kammerspiele Oper production of *Mefistopheles*, which, if anything, lived on the edge of irrelevance. Some scenes recalled Rainer Maria Rilke's music, others a deliberately heavy television version of Disneyland, others a series

of the stories. But of the Ensemble had sacrificed everything to the message of *Galileo* the Kammerspiele Oper had taken the opposite route. The visual effects, the imaginative use of technical resources, the minutiae of a contemporary figure: dancing girls and singers were all used for immediate impact but had little to do with the statement of the work itself. In the same way that Galileo turned clear of any reference to the present day GDR, *Mefistopheles* was made to embrace a world and an ideology which are unknown to the happy citizens there whose consciousness has never been disturbed by the capitalist ethos for play-makers.

The same funkiness for spaciousity, for intellectual as place of a conscious view of the whole, for moments of moving theatrical imagery was to be found in *Wien, Berlin* in Peter Stein's production with the Schaubühne am Halleschen Ufer of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. The past achievements of Stein and his ensemble — memorable productions of *Hamlet*, *Don Quixote* and *Requiem* — have established this company's reputation as one of Europe's most adventurous and imaginative.

This time, the journey into the unknown which every evening at the Schaubühne involves began with a journey to the known itself — really an expedition into the wilds of Berlin. One travelled by special train but not along the usualised tracks of Berlin to Spandau where the production was being staged in the CCC (Karl Beckhoff) — Cranching over ground and snow and surrounded by trees and moss, one could at first be pardoned for thinking that the two divergent had mistaken Spandau Prison for the venue of the play. But once inside an enormous vaulted room, twice as long as it was wide, painted a light blue which gave the surroundings an cold atmosphere of sterility and aerial transparency, one soon realised that this particular building was a theatrical invention — a metaphorical prison, real and oppressive. I have never found the world of the court at the start of the play more effectively, more challengingly realised. The audience, crammed together and not allowed to sit down, found itself both viewer and participant in the intrigues and physical and emotional which are the touchstones for past standards of the younger Duke's court. The winking scene between Orlando and Charles is huge: real life (my mother) was superbly staged and the history of Orlando in one and of the comical-like chatter, getting words and well against his Uncle Frederick in the other, had the audience following the exchanges as if they were looking into a bowl of swirling, whirlpool, only. The thirty five minutes that represented the running time of the first act were as exciting and tense as any I have spent in the theatre.



Peter Stein's *As You Like It*

All the more disappointing there was the more to the point of *Aiden*. For this the audience thronged through an opening which suddenly appeared in the wall of the main chamber, and, winding its way through what seemed like endless subterranean galleries with waterfalls, stairways and assorted flora and fauna, (rather like a sophisticated haunted ghost train trip), suddenly emerged into a vast open hall lit up with lighting grids and decked out with high carvells, various playing areas, a transplanted tree lake and stators on three sides round the major playing area. All very impressive, but after a time each spectator was very much like the housewife who's on viewing the Grand Canyon "Great isn't it?"

After the confusion of the court, the huge expanse provided both actors and audience with what in the long run turned out to be an immeasurable problem of focus. Not simply because Sear had chosen to furnish every major piece of dialogue or action with a visual point of accidental switches of viewpoints, perspective and locations on the other playing areas,

but because he seemed deliberately to have reduced the actors' distance to that of power in an elaborate three-dimensional game of chess.

However bad it that some of the company had protested at the rehearsal the production had taken and that there had been several modifications. It was significant that the one outstanding performance — John Langer's Rosalind — had apparently been arrived at in the face of Sear's suggestions and the opinion of the actors standing on finding her own, more conventional line through the role. That Sear had assembled for the production more ideas and pieces of experience shaping than most directors manage in a lifetime is beyond dispute. But there was something undeniably perverse about his refusal to play even Sear's approach to Shakespeare's text (which he seemed to have opted in favour of an over intellectualised tradition of what Shakespeare might also have written had he been aware of Freud, Bion, Lacan, the noble savage, ecological protest groups and Sear himself). And so the impression was one of fear and a half hours of spectacle, in

some instances, more brutal and colourless. But the most interesting and perhaps the most successful image was that of John Langer using all the technical techniques to produce a performance at once at odds with and more loving than the audience and applauding efforts which at times required both for and the plot.

If it was praise of effects which dominated the production, it was a deliberate mockery and a self-conscious gesture that disappointed the Shakespearean scholar crowd offering — a companion of *Coriolanus* based on the *Theater Company's* *Coriolanus* — a companion of *Coriolanus* based on the *Theater Company's* *Coriolanus*. It is to note that there are serious within the Shakespeare Company, resulting from the debate concerning the respective claims of the primacy of the director and the winning democracy of the collective. The Shakespeare Shakespeare is very much Sear's product. The *Coriolanus* very much the actors'. They disagreed, and each on the point, and if one were being unkind one might say it frequently showed that the casting was less or superficial than was more professional. Currently a vulgar term in use in South Australia where it seems to pass anything from leaving one's legs to playing inside on stage in live spaces of the *Coriolanus* piece than in the work of any Australian company I have seen — *Practical* accepted — or indeed many English companies. And yet one has reservations about the value for their efforts. The project was intended to demonstrate the effectiveness of collective as well as the immediate relevance of the theatre to the society which supports it, but *Coriolanus*'s devoting its time to such and destructive associations of the *Theater of the Absurd* seemed to have pointed back, at worst more whimsy. And in a theatre of collective theatre it showed many of the weaknesses of the collective's economic attempt to construct a house, only to end up with a castle.

Nothing has admiration for the performers mostly Peter Fitz is several roles, two often with the, instead of some who kept showing up being stood by the lights, and conversation in that particular connection who most have decided that performers were top priority, and such considerations as blocking, sight lines, lighting and tempo all incidental. If the casting showed anything it was precisely how necessary a good director is for a talented group of actors. Maybe not the director Sear seems to have become, but the one he stood was. Not the superior, who can afford to stage complete spectacles because his position in the school order enables a success, but the leader of an ensemble whose members are questioning and constructive dissent as the production forces they can be. For divergent opinions should be focused in a necessary curriculum to consensus and to that felt with glow of satisfaction with a job adequately done which reflects the energy of those involved with the theatre. And that is a danger in fact in Australia as it is in Germany.

Michael Morley



People Continuing her love for Rosalind in *As You Like It*



The teenage scene in Marlowe's *Caliban*

Australian Centre, International Theatre Institute



STOP PRESS:

LEADING ITALIAN DIRECTOR TO VISIT AUSTRALIA

Gioseppe Bartolucci, director of the Teatro Stabile/Teatro de Roma, and leading critic and exponent of the Italian avant garde theatre, will visit Australia in August.

He will be taking part in "The First Australian Conference on Italian and Italy Today", organised by the Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies, Sydney University, from August 27th to 31st.

The aim of the conference is "to provide an international and interdisciplinary forum for the study and interchange of ideas on the political, cultural and social conditions of present day Italy". Further parts will come from Italy and other parts of Antichina.

Bartolucci will be presenting a paper entitled "Theatricalisation and the avant garde theatre". After the conference he will participate in intensive seminars/workshops on avant garde theatre.

Workshop will be funded by the Australian Council and various Italian companies. People wanting further information should contact:

The Secretary,
Frederick May Foundation for
Italian Studies,
University of Sydney, NSW 2006
Tel. 692-2874

AMERICAN NEWS

The Japan-United States Friendship

Commission awarded its first professional theatre tour grant of \$100,000 to the American Conservatory Theatre. The purpose of the Commission, established by Congress in 1975, are to "aid education and culture at the highest level in order to enhance reciprocal people to people understanding and to support the close friendship and睦aid of interest between the United States and Japan". ACT will present two plays from its repertory, *Alf The Way Above* and *Alf Wilderness* and will play a two-week engagement at the San Sotiria Kusan Theatre in downtown Tokyo.

Yola Spolin, creator of the Theatre Game system and author of *Improvisation for the Theatre* and *Theater Games* etc. will conduct an intensive six week summer workshop for actors and theatre professionals. The workshop, entitled *Theater Games - The Key to Improvisation*, will be held at the Spolin Theatre Game Center, 4630 Santa Monica Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90026, from June 17 to August 4, 1978.

The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and the Michael Schepman Workshop, Inc from New York will hold a joint programme of four weeks of intensive study at LAMDA, in London, from July 17 - August 11, 1978. The programme features twenty five hours of classes per week. LAMDA teachers will hold classes in Shakespeare, verse, scene study, movement and stage lighting. Michael Schepman, former instructor at the Los Shierberg Theatre Institute, will conduct

classes in "The American Method". The programme will also include guest lectures and tickets to six London theatre productions.

— Courtesy of the American ITI Newsletter April 1978

NEW PLAYSCRIPTS

The Hungarian Centre of the ITI has been carrying out a very valuable theatrical service for over a year now. It has collected new plays by Hungarian playwrights from all parts of the world, translated them into English, French and other languages and distributed them to all ITI centres.

The Australian Centre of the ITI now has approximately fifty new scripts translated into English, and those interested in receiving a list of these plays should contact the office.

DANCE INFORMATION NEEDED

The Hungarian Centre of the ITI has also started an information service on dance in various countries and distributed three issues throughout the world. The aim of the Bulletin is to inform on dance companies, staff, structure, but significant performance etc. to create an international flow of dance information.

The editor, G. P. Dimes, Hungarian Centre of the ITI, 187 Budapest, Herold Sander Ter 4, would like news from Antislav dance companies about current seasons, both past and future for publication in the next issue.

Susan Patterson, ITI Editor

MUSICALS FOR AMATEUR SOCIETIES AND SCHOOLS

J. C. Williamson Theatres Limited holds the amateur rights for many popular musicals including great shows of the past with music by Lerner, Harnburg, Jerome Kern, Victor Herbert and Lionel Lincoln. Early one of these shows has been a success on the professional stage. Why not have your school or Amateur Musical Society do their own production of one of them? You can choose from many wonderful shows including the following —

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VERDUGUE
THE GISHA

PAINT YOUR WAGON

THE DESERT SONG
THE MERRY WIDOW

A COUNTRY GIRL

THE GAIETY GIRL
VICTORIA AND HER HUSSAR
A WALTZ DREAM
FLORADORA

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This MTC production is a landmark.

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM

RAYMOND STANLEY

The Beaux Stratagem by George Farquhar
Melbourne Theatre Company Australian
Theatre Melbourne: Vic Opera: May 4, 1978
Director: Frank Houser; as: Tony Trapp,
co-director; Kim Carpenter; lights arranged by
William Zappa; choreography: Colinda
Mann.

Cast: Dan Barker; Chorus: Lynette
Garrang; Captain John Boreman: Arnold
Murray; Brading: Ayler; David Downer;
Donna: Sally Cahill; Mrs. Sully: Jeanne
Hagan; Sully: Ian Hodgeman; Ruth:
Edwina Hodgeman; Celia: John
Stewart; Cap: Katy Wild; Fop:
Jonathan Hardy; Claret: Brian; Robert
Brett; Comptroller: Sally Baskitt;
Lady Louisa: Irene Innes; Brindley:
Stephen Bishop; Bagshot: Peter Curtis;
Sir Charles: Frank; Michael Edgar;
Fop: John; Mrs. Sully: Sally Baskitt;
Peter Curtis; Katy Wild.



Michael Edgar (Sir Charles Fop) and Lynette Hagan (Mrs. Sully)
in the MTC's *The Beaux Stratagem* (Photo: David Parker)

At last! The MTC has come up with a classical production about which one can unequivocally rave. And the big reason is that it is the type of classic hardest for Australians to perform, being the early 18th century *The Beaux' Stratagem*.

Usually considered George Farquhar's best play, *The Beaux' Stratagem* was written in six weeks in his thirtieth year. He died not long after its first performance at London's Haymarket in 1707. It is generally recorded that had he lived on he would have been a dramatist of considerable significance, far surpassing any of his contemporaries.

Strangely, his *The Recruiting Officer* is better known in this country, and is in fact the first known performed play in Australia — in 1768 by convicts.

The Beaux' Stratagem can be considered to contain some autobiographical segments in it, since Farquhar is known to have married a country-woman for her supposed fortune of seven hundred pounds a year, only to discover it was not content. The two main characters, Archer and Amwell, are on the look-out for rich heiresses to wed. Also the play ends exactly with a proposed divorce, and there are some grounds for believing that at the time of writing it, Farquhar was proposing to desert his wife.

The part of Mrs. Sully, the rich society woman, married to an uncouth country squire who is only interested in her money, is generally considered one of the best comedy roles in the classics. With the

exception of Mrs. Sully, nearly all the leading actresses of the 18th century played it. In 1937, and again in 1938, Dame Edith Evans had an enormous success with the part. I myself saw Kay Hammond in John Clements' production (in which he played Archer) which ran for over five hundred performances in 1948, and then again in 1957 saw a Birmingham Repertory Company production which had Albert Finney as Archer and, in the role of Amwell, Colin George (now director of the South Australian Theatre Company). Maggie Smith played the role for Britain's National Theatre Company in 1973.

Knowing how Renaissance-type plays require expert playing in style and manner, I approached the production with an excited anticipation mingled with trepidation. In theory one could thank nobody better equipped in Australia for the two main roles than leader Hagan and David Downer. In retrospect I am full of praise for almost everything about the production, and in particular for Frank Houser's masterly direction.

The plot of *The Beaux Stratagem* is probably more straight-forward and less cluttered with sub-plots and characters than a great many other 17th and 18th century plays. At the same time, most Australian directors inadvertently would have managed somehow to make it appear confused. In Houser's own hands though, from the very beginning it comes over clear-cut, with every sentence appearing meaningful. Here and there subtle little touches of amusing 'business' are intro-

duced, but never grossly expanded as is frequently done in MTC productions. Only on the final night again is there a tendency to overplay for laughs — and this is probably the fault of William Zappa who arranged the light.

It is difficult to believe the performances coming from some actors whose abilities one has tended previously to under-rate. Unconsciously the impression is frequently created that one is watching a company of skilled English actors at work, as exemplified in the recent Clochester production of *The Apple Cart*. Such ensemble playing has not been seen from the MTC since Graham's production of *All's Well That Ends Well*. Quite obviously the experienced guidance of Houser is responsible.

Lynette Hodgeman seems to get every ounce out of the role of Sully, and then some more. Lynette Curran as Cherry once again reveals what strength and versatility she is capable of if given the direction. Sally Cahill — at last getting away from her 'little girl' roles — proves with Debbie that she is quite able to carry off more mature roles with aplomb. All the old ladies from Innesport has played at the MTC, none has seemed more realistic or endearing than her Lady Louisa (in pity it could not have been the model for her own-level despicable Miss Downer). Jonathan Hardy has never appeared to display such restraint as Fop, and in all the more effective; and until seeing Dan Barker as Boreman, one had always felt him to be a mile away from the Crooked pole.

look.

Of the three principals, the role of Archer appears all too easy for David Downer and he sits along with that magnificent rooster of his, never missing a trick. Mervyn Franks, always a fine actor, seems a shade under par as Knewell, perhaps it is in the end the role itself, but one has certainly seen him to more advantage. Finally to come to Jennifer Hagen, whom one would imagine to be the ideal Mrs. Sullivan with — like Kay Hammond and Maggie Smith — a measured style and distinctive voice. Maybe she was expecting just a little too much, Miss Hagen is always good and stands out in whatever she does, but in this particular production her fellow performers are more to her level, and she does not seem to go much beyond it herself. My personal view is that she knows too much, underplays at times when there should be a tendency rather to overplay and dominate the proceedings. Since one credits Hauer with the other performances, one must also hold him responsible for that Mrs. Sullivan. Just the same, it still cannot think of anyone in the country who could play it better.

Again and again one blames the review stage, which spends up the production and helps to make it run so smoothly. Another line, practical at times from Tony Trip. The costumes of Kim Carpenter, are thankfully not designed to overshadow the production or cause any sensations, however one finds the use of so many browns and similar hues somewhat monotonous and it might have been effective to occasionally make use of some brighter colours, or else perhaps some pastel shades.

All in all though, this MTC production is a landmark, which is likely to be a yardstick for sometime to come. A pity that it cannot tour to other States. Perhaps the ABC might be persuaded to record it for posterity.

lapped up a fruit salad deliberately dashed to the carpet by a waiter. The cynicism seems justified as humans are frail.

What cannot be justified, in any sense, is a similar kind of cynicism from performers who aren't all that inspired. They'd be far better off being cynical towards their own material or themselves, preferably before they walked on stage.

Watching Frances La Crene and The Busby Berkleys, I can hardly recall one laugh in about a last one. Admittedly, the audience were moved to laughter a little more frequently at times they were whipped up into applause. A proportion of the males even seemed galled and irritated by the sexual posturing salacious of Frances. Between and behind these aspects of appreciation the response was appropriately flat. Inevitably, Henry Mann, who sets the tone of disdain for this tale, felt compelled to stomach the crowd as typical Saturday nighters.

Frances La Crene has one fine attribute, her voice, an instrument she wields most effectively in quasi-blues. Elsewhere, she leans to woodenness and ineffectuality, her meekness is often limited to sudden changing baroqueism intended, it would appear, to convey passion.

Her sex wren set in one that would render the very most of Ulysses limp, all caress and no reward. No amount of décolletage, plum-coloured lip, leopard skin leaping, vertical spreading and subsequent pelvic action can camouflage a poverty of flair, humour, and emotional sting.

The Busby Berkleys, attired in trendy pink muscades, appear in a series of solo fourteen Flanagan and Allen routines, to which they attach a demureness of dance and mime, with clown-like faces and puppet-like choreography. Instead of alighting through hard thought and work, the potential comic expressiveness of these

diverse modes, the techniques are merely indulged for themselves and are modified at the same time. Because there is little behind the displays of pseudo-artifice, their entertainment ends up in comedy and stick as the American corn and thickness they purport to satirise, as pretence as Busby Berkley himself.

As a comedian Henry Mann is more pious than Jewish, he merely trades off the thousand of Yiddish perennials, his humour is more stand-up Californian. He doesn't really belong to the great tradition of Jewish humour which is incredibly tough, snappy, caustic and self-satirical, a very real survival tactic for a tribe of survivors. A siffle through a few pages of Leo Rosten's *The Age of Yiddish* would reveal that.

Any humour depends on the allowed appreciation by the audience of the essential incongruity. The fullest of material can be made shockingly funny by their timing and ironic colour is a constant of other understatement, as the English comedian Harry Tate demonstrated once and for all. Henry Mann, whose material is no less subtle, does not allow the audience to misapprehend. Maybe he doesn't trust them, which is only another way of saying maybe he doesn't trust himself. Shut down, hence the half-vigilant half-mocking nervous giggle immediately after every a punch line.

The Stuffed Puppets, who make up the rest of the evening, for all their crassness, for all their heavy-handed emphasis on the vulnerability of sexual appetite, have a head sense of fun. A lot of their sketches tend to be facile and underdeveloped, yet the puppets themselves are clever inventions, skillfully manipulated. One episode, concerning a plied yellow ring, is by far the funniest for the night, and the only one that is at all affecting.

As gimcrack as Busby Berkley himself.

TRUE ROMANCES

JACK HIBBERD

True Romance: the Busby Berkleys. Last Laugh Theatre: Restaurants and Zoo, Melbourne. Via Opened March 1978.

With Frances La Crene, Henry Mann, Neil Busby, Nicole Tranter, All Kinski, Ben Cooper, and the Stuffed Puppets.

Regardless of the particular show on at the time, the general atmosphere at The Last Laugh theatre restaurant inevitably has an element of audience manipulation. Many of the staff, in a cultivated fashion, alternate charlatanism and cynicism with flattery. It is a highly successful procedure. The audience either acquiesces or lip it up. Literally — the night I was there a patron





Must be played more as comedy than classic

THE MISANTHROPE

by L. M. WALKER

The Misanthrope by Molière, translated by Tony Harrison. Old Tote, Theatre Company, Drama House Sydney. NSW. Opening 26 April 1975. Director: Ted Craigie, Designer: Anne Prosser.

Alcibi: Barry Otto; **Celerone:** Kate Fitzpatrick; **Crassus:** Jan Ewing; **Philo:** Raymond Owers; **Lucius:** Joel Fawn; **Arctus:** Judy Mann; **Alcibi's Tutor:** Ron Lindsay; **Remond:** Mollie; **Secretary:** Graeme Rutherford; **Doctor:** Peter Rowley; **Reverend:** Ben Riddell.

Tony Harrison had what might almost be the best idea to come out of this spontaneously brilliant idea in translating and adapting Molière's comedy *The Misanthrope*. The original play is a work of genius satirising seventeenth century society, its aspirations and afflictions, with a rapier-like but deadly barbed wit, but it is hard today to extract a fresh theatrical sharpness from the archaic styling couplets. Tony Harrison has kept the verse form, but applied it and most of the allusions — to de Gaulle's Paris — which, far from dulling the edge, keeps the thrust and punny going at speed.

A precise social setting is essential to both the form and content of *The Misanthrope* (indeed in this type of comedy, Alcibi must be able to rebel against a particular situation, and the Paris of the '60's is a most appropriate environment in which to place a modern day Alcibi). The French celebration movement had at that time reached its popular apogee and was just beginning to find itself constricted by a sense of the gentle philosophy of the new humanism, and Alcibi's repugnant social principles which prove to be impractical in terms of real life, are rendered poignant by the contrast of which he would-be modern approach takes no account. In general terms the human social net has doubtless changed very little from then to now, with sitcoms giving rise to exaggerated social attitudes and distant interests in the arts (The ageing friends may not by then have been so common in Australian circles, but just as a grotesque idea, an excellent metaphor, perhaps, for dramatic theatricality).

Although the Old Tote production was smooth in its execution, it somehow conveyed an effect of displacement, of location, situation and character. The set,



Raymond Owers (Philo), Barry Otto (Alcibi) and Judy Mann (Arctus) in the Old Tote's *Misanthrope*. Photo: John McFarlane

though suggesting suitable opposition appeared, because of the trap door like staircase, to be an attic room in which was surprisingly located a bar and rather uncomfortable looking sofa. (With the minute gap between sofa and coffee table, and all the doors to be negotiated, the actors' agility must be applauded.) This implied neither Calzone's sales, nor a room to and from which people would naturally drift from a larger party elsewhere.

The disproportionate setting also had the effect of making Barry Otto's Alcibi, who is almost constantly on stage, look quite at home in this perhaps eccentric room, whereas Calzone wandering in and out could well have been the disconcerted visitor.

Otto's Alcibi was a thoroughly likeable chap and quite understandable in his cooperation with Kate Fitzpatrick's Calzone, but his expressions of anger were so lacking in tenderness and subtlety that Raymond Duparc and Neil Furr as the two meddlers, had little scope for contrast.

Though Calzone in her letters reads Alcibi as just one more extreme in a society of extremes, he is not put in the role of the outsider ridiculed and pilloried, as in classical comedy and Molière's other work. His return has great integrity and that puts him above all others who do not, and even those who do have it but compromise to why don't he continue to love Calzone? This production leaves the question unanswered, for Kate Fitzpatrick's alien is one only of power. The intelligence and wit that leaves her still finally in control of her followers does not travel through the lines into the person-

ality. As the recipient of the strongest feelings of most of the characters, she unfortunately leaves a gaping hole at the centre of the play.

Although it is part of the "classical" season, and *The Misanthrope* is a classic comedy, it must be played more as a comedy than classic. At the Tote it loses power by apparently being treated with too much reverence. Tony Harrison's text is fun and funny. It would be wonderful and irrelevant to compare this one to the London production with Alan McGowan and Diana Rigg, except to say that there the audience laughed at every other line (each couplet) because they were spoken as they were written, often in self-mockery, while the Drama Theatre audience listened in hushed silence, and that I far preferred Judy Mann's more subtle and witty Arctus.

Keeping prejudices intact.

JOURNEY'S END ROMEO AND JULIET

GILLIAN CURRAN

Journey's End by R. C. Sherril. Manna Room, Theatre Sydney NSW. Opening 14 April 1975. Director: Alexander Duncan; Designer: Michael O'Mara.

Handy: Tim McInerney; **Colonel:** Joe Jackson; **Major:** John Larking; **Kilgob:** Duncan Parkes; **Sargeant:** Tim Hughes; **Tutor:** Carl Jackson; **Hobbs:** Ron Howard; **Capt:** Ron Mackett; **Colonel:** Vincent Bell; **Colonel's Soldier:** Terry Puck.

Journey's End, written just ten years after the Armistice, in 1928, has a little something for everyone. And perhaps not quite enough for anyone. As war plays go it is fairly far from false heroics yet for those who still see the world in terms of the Empire as top dog, it does not lack a certain cynicism and complacency. It says that everyone is likely was not a hero, yet it admires heroism and makes the regimental command dignified, serious and ridiculous. It indicates that as the trenches were more enlightened indeed, but on the other hand just needed finer treatment (like the barrel of a gun pressed to the temple) to snap those out of it.

Journey's End deplores the wasted lives of war, but takes the fact of war as given. It expresses a sort of mild disillusionment, while deploping misanthropy. Maybe that is why the author, caught so often sitting on the trench, can only go far types in his dramatic personae: there are some minor moments and the odd moment of reality, but no depth or consistency. Even the play's physical format is a paradox. It has a brief few settings, yet for the greater part of the evening sees the war as a mere backdrop. And, although talk prevails over action, the dialogue hardly begins to tap the vein of serious concern one might have expected from the literary stature of the late Twenties, in the wake of such war war stalwarts as Edmund Spenser, Siegfried Sassoon, and Robert Graves.

The author R. C. Sherriff had begun to write a novel on the theme of hero worship between two schoolboys, Stanhope and Raleigh. Later this was scrapped and Raleigh became a new class officer in a British dog eat in *Private Stanhope* is the admired senior officer, a former school captain when Raleigh was in primary school, engaged to Raleigh's sister. But Stanhope is drinking himself into a stupor. He finds the presence of Raleigh an embarrassment, fearful of what he might write home and so on.

If Sherriff had paralleled the blind hero worship of school days with the false values of war, dramatized the giving and taking of stupid and dangerous orders, maybe analyzed the substitution of one set of authority figures for another, translated, as it were, the playing fields of Eton to Flanders Fields, or even written a play about the effects of a great disillusionment on Raleigh, *Journey's End* might have become a classic, of sorts. But little of this emerges. Stanhope's resentment of the younger man is based on fear of discovery, yet he lacks the cunning to support even that motive. Raleigh should see through Stanhope at once — he seems a rising machine from the start. There's a party scene where Stanhope demands to see Raleigh's letters home on the grounds (quite spurious ones, naturally understood) that all mail must be censored, and an amusing sequence of the DT's which is not public but hardly private either and unlikely to inspire confidence. And that's in the first half. Yet later in the play Stanhope, looking at Tom Hughes' performance, healthy and capable at all times, despite the occasional rigors in the man of action, stage managing an absurd ferry behind German lines (though the

author doesn't send him personally), carrying out orders yet protesting at loss of life. Stanhope is "Gael" above all in his own and deals with the higher-ups in a more or less disappointing fashion. The play accepts the choice of the high command as something to be looked at and stayed, albeit with regret. Moreover he is able to demonstrate local discipline by "planting" a mad-with-fear junior officer (Hobbs).

In this scene Stanhope points a gun at the head of the unfortunate man, and when the latter doesn't agree to stay and fight loudly because death is preferable) congratulates his subordinate on his supposed courage (this could have been ironic, but nothing seems intended). Then, after sending Hobbs to a more suitable kind of nervous wreck, he explains, in a kindly manner that he too is afraid.

As the evening progresses, one wonders if Stanhope is meant to be admired, in it the war or is he just a dangerous snob? When "Uncle" Osborne, an older officer, Stanhope's friend, confident and "sunny" the tricks him in at times of great pseudosentiment (a jest with Raleigh on the top behind enemy lines and is killed, the proving Stanhope behind like a pig to Raleigh. Yet it was not the progress comes under but the unfortunate junior who had to look a German soldier under his arm and drag him back to the English lines (an image not entirely free from comedy).

No, Raleigh is only to get sympathy from his hero when a shell blows him in half. Sentimental, if not more, manipulative even, this scene is still the best in the play, and quite moving. Manipulations of the war drama may have no necessary connection with art, or even a good play, but Sherriff has done well here, against the odds he has not himself.

In another good bit the Germans are acknowledged as decent — they allowed

two of "our boys" to carry a wounded man back to camp, and let them on their way. Although this is only cold and not very immediate, it is perfectly acceptable. But complete logic much better something similar is done in *Oh What a Lovely War!* There you may recall, the Germans and the English were united on Christmas Eve by the women's singing of "Silent Night", a temporary truce was declared, and presents (and good wishes) swapped. And there of course even the vague similarity ends — *Oh What a Lovely War!* satirizes the English high command, exposes incompetence, corruption and the venality of the war machine, rage over wasted lives. Little of this emerges in the quarrelled world of *Journey's End* nor for the most part, do the shells and mortar. Until for that is, when some of the old fails to fly down. There is more atmosphere of combat in *Oh What a Lovely War!* (which is, after all, a song and dance revue) than in all this fairly "realistic" drama.

At Kellian the cast took too much thoroughness to suggest contrast with the seamer aspects of trench life (the rats, or seeping water). And once Stanhope and Raleigh are almost unplayable — Tim Hughes and Duncan Parkes are only effective interestingly (the former an unconvincing drunk, the latter largely confined to pained "sorry" and general embarrassment).

Elsewhere, things are better. Although Arthur Duncan's production rarely develops the relationships beyond the flat bones of the text, it is careful and well paced, and not without a certain shimmer. Nothing drags too much and there is good acting from the James (a warm human Osborne), Curt Jensen, and Tom McCarthy (assuming as officer) and John Larking (chaf cook and bottle waiter). Indeed *Journey's End* is not really boring and sometimes entertaining. Why then do I find it irritating?



Left: Tim McCarthy as Captain Osborne. Above: Arthur Duncan.

Well in the first place, to be deemed worthy of revival, shouldn't old war plays have something to tell us, shouldn't they raise our consciousness just a bit? Isn't war too important to be represented on stage by well made chat plays? Aren't theatre audiences smart enough to be bored by cherry daisies? Probably not. With *Joanney's End* a suburban audience can congratulate itself on the enlightened discovery that war is a bloody affair, and at the same time return its prejudices intact. Few conservative values are known to have opposed Vietnam, and if the Federal Government reintroduced conscription tomorrow, I doubt anyone would take to the streets of Kilara. *Joanney's End* notwithstanding.

Why is the set for the Actor's Company *Romeo and Juliet* located in grey-green hills? Is the play taking place in a forest, or a swamp? Why are the women fully clothed and the men in various states of undress. Romeo for instance appears in a jungle boy t-shirt, Mercutio looks dishevelled in a tank. Poor Laurence is vegeant in privet-cul-de-sac, with a bunhead and gold chains at more formal moments. It's no use asking why the director didn't restrain the worst excesses of the setting because apart from Kate Farguson (Juliet) and John Pasquero (Mercutio) there isn't any. Nor can one recommend critics — he's done that already (I won't complain). Still we might legitimately ask why *Romeo and Juliet* couldn't have been left in peace on the library shelf, where school children may get some idea of what it's about. In this production, when the play ends, it's not only the lovers that are laid out cold.

Not just exonerated but extolled.

COMEDY OF ERRORS

ERIC BIRNALL

Comedy of Errors, by William Shakespeare, Nimrod Theatre Society. NTA. Opened 11 April 1978. Director John Bally. Designer Larry Eastwood. Costumes, Nikki Pettibon. Lighting, David Reed. Stage Manager, Margie Wright.

In the Duke Office: Robert Lons, Lillian Buchanan. Henry Bange, Amphibolus. Malcolm McElroy, Amphibolus. Tony Sheldene, Doctor John McTearney. Doctor Drew Forsyth, Admetus. Muggie Bange, Lysander. Elizabeth Lindstrom, Nell. Muggie Bange, Muggie. Angela Lyle, Proprietess. Robert Dawling, Dr. Puck. Mrs. Lons, Robert Newell. Courtier Anne Velasco.

When a theatre company reaches a certain stage of maturity and accomplishes some things in a tendency especially among the more senior of critics, to demonstrate their prowess by looking with patronage, disdain and even scorn upon their offerings. Otherwise how can one explain the response of two of our major critics to *The Australian* and *The Sydney* to *Comedy Of Errors*?



Robert Lons, Amphibolus, Malcolm McElroy, Lillian Buchanan, Tony Sheldene, John McTearney, Doctor Drew Forsyth, Muggie Bange, Angela Lyle, Proprietess, Robert Dawling, Dr. Puck, Mrs. Lons, Robert Newell, Courtier Anne Velasco.

When they in address themselves to searching even fairly recent examples of various productions they would discover almost to the point of consternation how often the play has been plundered for its entertainment potential. It has spawned an opera, the *American Musical The Boy From Syracuse* and even in the hallowed halls of the Royal Shakespeare Company has had some songs interpolated through its text, winning for Shakespeare several "best musical" awards in 1976. John Bell, then, even fell in the line of fire with such other dissonant lightweights as *Kompanyerky*, Clifford Williams and *Tyrer Man*.

Theatrical precedent alone cannot defend itself from the argument that he should have ignored or transcended such shallow peers. His must finally stand or fall in relation to the best itself. Here I believe he should not only be exonerated, but extolled, and not merely for the manner in which his ordained business for actors cuts like a shining scythe through the dense undergrowth of allusion, references and puns — but for the subtle influence of the style of this production with that implied by the text.

Perhaps our two critical commentators might have addressed themselves to the way the play itself flows from the mingling of two streams, the romantic and classical comedy. And the former to a great extent backdates the latter in this play. Thus when one of these "tuttles down" after Henry Bange's moving speech as the father in search of a lost family and sentenced to death for being found on alien territory 'in the confident expectation that the play would be coherent as well as entertaining', something is expected that the play itself cannot provide.

For the play shifts from its romantic beginnings on any case largely a cleverly assembled prequel to the classical standpoint of its secrets. And classical comedy had no place for such old men,

and as the village and norms of youth, but was a balustrade large dependent on the very banishment, crude and tricky humour which these critics disdain so in this production. Even Larry Eastwood's gaudy shirting set, in my mind, has a masterful elegance, farre almost by definition requires numerous doors, to creep them onto a cultured manner both the antediluvian plots of the central scenes and their whirling reviled successes. The foreground effect contains within it the pointed magic and twofold pleasure coming of the Elysian writing *Comedy* open as a kind of *Care of the Day*.

If the actors often look like puppets it is because their strings are not being gently tugged by tenderly human plots of intent, more typical Shakespearean comedy, but gripped by the mechanical complexities of a classically Roman kind. Indeed Borge, the great destruction of the comic, disputes the possibility of the human possibly the critics saw as wanting, "laughter has no greater enemy than reason . . . comedy must not move us", and move to the point "attributes, pictures of the human body are some in exactly the same proportion as the body makes us think of a simple machine".

The postmodernists arise from Shakespeare's can play all the permutations possible from playing two sets of twins, the Amphibolus and their servant Doctors, unbeknownst to each other, in the same place at the same time. The one alone to Ephesus is played as a ghostly tourist by Tony Sheldene, only slowly realising his vulnerability to the same threat which hangs over his father, and with increasing fear for the mistaken humble reception he receives.

Were it a "dark" comedy the belted he comes to that Ephesus is a place of "dark working secrets" and "Soul-biting wishes" could be played for profound significance, being left with a kind of topically the Elizabethans would have



upheld, arms his actors with laser-wounds straight out of *Star Wars*. (I again, were it a romantic comedy, this Antipolish generosity toward flight after falling head over heels for Luciana, actually his sister-in-law, could not be met by the impenetrable deflating stare of a painted doll (Elizabeth Lamour).

In classical mode, there is much, also about the sexual theme, but little on the cause of true love. Adeline, wife of the local mean-spirited town Astraphon (Machodon Kerkis), must not be allowed to wallow in "the hard and gloomy island (her) predicament." Cuts the suggestion, "she is a virgin who has drawn her husband from her door — at her mother's insistence to get out. But she may be more fully satisfied than the stouthead there, but is only catching the twentieth century consciousness when she asks "Why should man's throat then, can be open?"

She shared Ann Voski's brazenly seductive playing of the Courtroom as defined for social comment. That she has no excuse for her extraordinary attitude and the "unwired" she provides for the masters of the community is probably more acceptable to our own times and certainly to the Romans than to the romantic Elizabethan, who at least publicly stood for fidelity in marriage.

The Division too are the downstaged clown of classical comedy, save when the pants-dance girl (*Maggie*) flirts, nearly brings me to a dramatic roar. Both suffer the fatal knowledge imparted by their mentors, though both serve too as confidants. Agnes Bergman (and, specifically, such irrepressible Elizabeths) claims as Tarlton and Kempe supports the use of verbiage-laden licks in the service of true comedy; the "accomplishment" of John Mifflin and Drew Forsythe in this regard, then, can hardly be the least of his persuasive resources. With a style neither trendy nor a "devaluation of Shakespeare", rather it is a cutting away of false posturing and need, back to something much closer to what that playwright's stage prescribed.

If the producers had *had* him, and no one would claim it perfect, to my mind they are more the *had*in of trying to construct movement to the *had*in of the *had*in, as the use of *had* for the *had*in, who are too *had*in in *had* and *had* — though of course to have them indistinguishably identical would defeat the *had*.

This production, as cheekily suggested by the leopards' dolls, shows that directorial imagination has come a long way since Ray Lawler's heyday. Some must want it to remain the tinkering sand of matinees (certainly a brief diversion when dramatic history is taken as a whole), it saddens that any critic can long for the "reality of [the] first scene." But no, for those were the same who applauded an actually less cynically defensible bag of tricks for *hit-and-stay*.

William Archer once wrote "What one requires in the theatre is, so to speak, a certain presence of pleasurable emotions in the square inch, or rather in the minute." John Bull's great strength, in my view, on his ability to provide just that.

1 + 2 HENRY IV BY
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE[illegible][illegible]

Adapted and Directed by Gaille George
Script and Screenplay by Hugh
Graham. Lyrics by Hugh
Graham. Music by Hugh
Graham.

Colin George became the latest in the long and apparently winding line of directors who have taken liberties with Shakespeare for his latest production with the South Australian Theatre Company.

1 + 2 + 3 Henry IV presents an amazing performance as an amalgam of the two parts of Henry IV (with a bit of Richard II) and Henry V. Mr. George's aim, stated in the programme notes, was for an entertainment "which contains the education of a prince, explores his relationship with his father and contemporaries, and the rejection of his role as very 'English'."

What is left out? For a start in this production Gledhill does not get a look in and Heston dies off stage and there is no one to abuse the guests. What is left in? Essentially, as Mr George says, the scenes between Blad and Fubini and Hal and the king, the contrast between the world of the court and the street.

But the real question must be: does it succeed? The state's response would be an only slightly qualified yes.

For much of its length it is a dark, monotonous play. The principal characters, at least those above the set, wear long military-style coats. The stage is mainly open with wooden platforms and objects touch as a throne, bed and benches moved into or out.

Only in the last scene, which has the crowned Henry V purposefully clad in a long robe contrived with heretic devices triumphant on a platform high above the stage: is there part poetry, made all the more effective by what has gone before and pointing to the future triumphs of a wasted passion.

Mr. Gough's remarking of the play highlights their political aspect (one wonders whether he was influenced by the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of the full cycle at Stratford a decade or more ago) and makes completely understandable Hall's rejection of the last knight. It is not only necessary politics, it is dramatic sense, common sense.

A dramatic touch in the play moved towards the climax was the brief scene between the brother, Boston Quincy and Doll Travolta in which George wins the woman showing the marks of a savage whipping, a neat reminder of the cruelty of the times. Another nice touch was that after the curtain falls the first female seen on the Adelaide stage for a considerable time the character clad now with much grace, Mrs. Fairfield. Her dress had a general in the British Sergeant Pepper air, like the costumes a few years

In all, there was a reading of the Bible which excited interest, stimulated thought and which worked drastically.

The cast, many of whom played double and some triple, roles acted extremely well together. Inevitably attention was focussed on Patrick Hui and the long

Kevin Madsen's Fabiani was the best thing he has done in Adelaide. Fedated by traditional style and, uncharacteristically, wearing trousers, pullover and boots for the early scenes, he was suitably out of sync, blustering and potty. It is fast time of the pattern of the character ("We have heard the charges at midnight, Madsen Shattow" he mixed some of the comedy

Michael Storry made a powerful but completely credible Prince Hal. He has a clear voice and possessed a character whose arc resulted from the outset to be marked for leadership and nobility, a man who only falters with reluctance. There was something solid about him, a man who never really forgets himself, still less his position. Mr. Storry's first Shakespearean lead, it was an impressive performance.

Ronald Falk's interpretation of the old king was equally impressive, a very good voice, in easy control of the poetry a ruler conscious of his approaching death and still tormented by his usurpation of Richard.

Special mention is due, too, of Daphne Gray's Mistress Quinby, Patricia Kennedy's Doll Teardrop and Leslie Dayman's Suedeboy, a trio of such grotesques and of Michael Fidler who, as one of his three parts, gives the audience a deliciously comic Eros.

playwright, in sustaining the fiction that these people are more than pawns in Koric's little game of 'how terrible it all is' socially committed materialism. It had thought the play for this stuff but it seems like the aforementioned verb, to be also continued. All very craftsmanlike, but being theatre *Goodbye* would perhaps make a good script for a television play aimed at the "serious, socially conscious" viewer. Director Ross had the whole thing well paced, and drew a particularly fine performance as the boy from Steve Macbeth, a novice professional only recently graduated from W.A.I.T.'s Theatre Arts course.

April seems to have been Perth's month for seasons of one-acters brought to you by the letter 'G', since we also had a short season of three plays gathered together under the general title of *Goodbye* (of the third kind) presented by U.D.S. at the New Dolphin Theatre. We had a past by Albert, *The Goodbye*, in which Edward once again shadow boxes with the American Dream, stalling his play with the old standby of his voice, powerful women, plastic virgins and *The Horror of Death*. This featured an excellent performance in the main role of Gregory by the director, Linda McDonald. We had a brilliant piece of vintage Van Halles, with Jean Claude doing a sort of *Almond Assistant in Paris*. A good example that, of how the conventions of the *Almond*, like most theatrical conventions, prove susceptible to the corruption of an essentially soap-operaic taste. There were however, a couple of strong performances, particularly that of Linda Cain as Doris II.

So far then, pretty standard mid-theatre fare if you will. So do stop and I reviewing *Goodbye*?

Because we also had a much more contemporary piece of the theatre of the *Almond* called *Almond*, by Ronald Tavis. This was directed by Neil Zandky, who has made his mark as an actor with a particular gift for male and off-beat roles (he did a little piece of a *Jaques* last year and was a remarkably comic *Salim* at Western of Arts at the Portman Wakefield Hotel). It seems that he has carried over this gift into the directorial realm, the *Almond* sparkled with the precise structures outrageous humour and down-right *Uddu* obscenity which can make the best kind of *Almond* theatre a truly liberating experience. From two of the most experienced love specialists here at mid-theatre (before relatively actors in U.D.S. Anna Payer and Keith Robinson Zandky give extraordinary performances. They tackled a difficult text in a mode easily devalued by pretension and tackled it with the authority and confidence of seasoned professionals. One more remarkable was the fact that two absolute novices in the other roles, Fiona Macdonald and Martin Duxbury, were able to perform to the same unexpectedly high standard.

I found this show very encouraging. With W.A.I.T. graduates now treading the professional boards in Perth and seasons of the equivalent U.D.S.'s *Goodbye* going forward the future of live theatre looks distinctly good. The yeast is waking and some talented young people are rising.



A thoroughly marketable product.

IN PRAISE OF LOVE

JOHN BASHFILL

The new management at Twelfth Night has made a well-calculated and business like start with a well-made version of a well-made play.

The opening was a veritable night of lights — in many ways, it felt as if the West End theatre was opening a branch in Bowen Hills. There was professional polish about, and purpose — down to the last room for lady patients.

As to the play, it is a delightfully drafted story about an Italian refugee, Hydral, formerly in the resistance, married for twenty-eight years to a mildly Marxist, quaintly self-centred critic (Schmuntz), formerly in British intelligence. They live not in Berlin whence he rescued Lyche by marrying her. Now it is discovered separately by husband and wife that she has a second fiance, and out of the discovery comes a sense of their long-neglected love. To find certain, however, the passion remains unshared. In the end, the play is a fairly rehearsed plea for British reserve, which might better be named "In Praise of Good Manners".

Indeed, Lyche's appeal to her son Joey to show a "little delicacy" — a polite ignoring of his father's indiscretions for the sake of family harmony — is a prototype for the elaborate subterfuge she and her husband are playing over her illness. To Rattigan the superficial domestic harmony should not be risked in search of some rather mutual appreciation and enjoyment which might result from a

little abrasion. It is here that one takes issue with the play, not that customers are worthless, but that earned to extremes they can at nearly ever so make a man.

With this in mind, let me mention the hybrid production set up now operating at Twelfth Night, whereby shows are set up and rehearsed by an Artistic Director (Bill Richmond) resident in Sydney, using largely comic actors who are then transported to Brisbane, where technical aspects of the show are co-ordinated. On this occasion set and costumes were made on contract by a QTC designer (Stephen Goss) in the QTC workshops. This is a policy that has work common daily and artistically, but at the level of local cultural acquisition is likely to be by rights in its results.

Which brings us to the production. Some slip-up between director and designer just the devil's tailer way over in one corner of the set, and the show started badly with a series of marathon walks to re-charge empty glasses. Further, a juxtaposition of a kind of re-lighting with four costumes against four carpets and linen wall paper made the opening misbegotten. By the second act however everything came together, and the total result was quite affecting. I always had a when Australian actors are that drawing some drama style which is a cliché of English commercial theatre. Mr. Harrison (Schmuntz) at least has the technical edge to being it. Anna Haddy (Lyche), on the other hand, turned conservative into pathos. Ron Fraser (Mark Walker) made the best showing by being simple, honest, and still. Greg Parks had an easy and winning command of the part of Joey. To claim that coherent live dressing gown was an achievement is small.

All in all a thoroughly marketable product has been produced which should realise the expressed wish of getting house on. *W.A.I.T.*

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LETTERS

Sir,

I realise we are but a small island state some 3000 miles from the Main Land, but not in the least of interests of all concerned to completely ignore us all.

There is the reawakening of theatre in Tasmania as well as film and local television productions and I do humbly request that a correspondent be found to inform you greater Australians of local interesting happenings. And just as a wee poem of interest, why is Tasmania not represented at the National Theatre Awards?

I would also like to take this chance to introduce ourselves, we are a new theatre group about 10 months and one production old, our first production being *What The Butler Saw*. The locals loved it (for all the wrong reasons) and our next work of love will be *Daughter Unbound* in a local pub whose owner is building us a theatre. (See cartoon above here for the arts.) We open on June 8 at the Ruston Factory, Launceston.

But seriously, I would love to see your magazine continue in its present form, with the exception of re-examinations.

Yours faithfully,
Bruce Kingsford,
Assistant, Playgroup Theatre,
Launceston, Tas.

P.O. Box 1646
IAATT Training,
C.P.O. Melbourne,
Victoria 3001
Tel 91 3143

Dear Sir,

May I offer to you as a news item worthy of your attention some detail about the Training

Courses being organised currently by my Association? You will be aware that the IAATT came into being nearly four years ago, and, as Victoria at least, has been able to flourish and prosper to great aims. One of these was based on the report that many of the best of our technicians either pass on or pass out of the business, and their abilities and skills are rarely communicated to others.

For two years we have now run successful training courses aimed at the young professionals, the would be professional and the dedicated amateurs. Currently we are starting a new venture in a series of weekend courses on a varied range of topics. The first on *Make Up Tips and Hair Styling for the Stage* has attracted a full quota of students. There are a limited number of vacancies for some second-year courses, and applications for these should be made to the above address as soon as possible.

Training and practical instruction, plus a good deal of actual involvement, is undertaken by experts in each field, many of whom have spent most of their lives in the commercial theatre. Venues for the courses are almost all theoretical, either on stage, in studios or workshops. For the Commission, for instance we go to the Victorian State Opera Company's workshops and the headquarters of the Melbourne Theatre Company. Thus a no mention of money making in the courses, the Association is motivated as a non-profit making organisation. Enrolled as a couple of the introductory brochures for the current training courses, and I trust you will find the programme worthy of attention.

The Victorian body is always ready to indicate new members to the Association, and information can be obtained by writing to the Secretary at the above postal box. General

meetings this year have attracted a large following, we have been to the top of Melbourne's highest building project, Collins Place, seen much of its vast electrical equipment and its two chimneys, we have been introduced to the floor and its application in stage technology, in May we take a look at new equipment in what must be Australia's largest conventional theatre, the Palace, attend the programme for the year promises to be full of interest both to the student and to the newcomers. Perhaps the best aspect of the Association is that it brings people in the business together to talk over old and new times, and gives them a chance to meet the newcomers, both professional and amateur, and maybe help them along the road by advice, instruction or merely camaraderie.

In thanking you for the anticipated use of some of the above, may I say how much each issue of your splendid magazine is enjoyed?

Yours sincerely,

Alan McIsaac,
IAATT Executive Member
& Training Convenor,
171 William Street, Melbourne, 3000

Dear Sir,

I don't want to appear unduly sensitive about the contents in the April issue of *Theatre Australia* concerning my action in starting the National Circus Award. (Although I think if you were aware of the lengths to which I went to avoid disturbing the awards, you would excuse me of my part in the affair. It was the critics themselves who started on publishing what was supposed to be an absolutely private matter.)

However, I would appreciate a correction of my supposed comments in your "Queen and Quorum" page. I did not disagree with the right of circus to a definite opinion. I disagreed with the right of circus to a definite *view* opinion.

I trust you will agree that there is a world of difference between the two statements.

Yours faithfully,

Ray Lawrie,
Melbourne, Victoria

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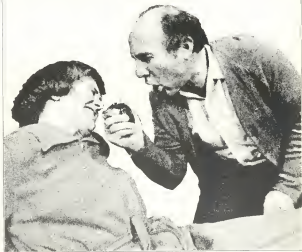
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DON'T PIDDLER AGAINST THE WIND MATE

ACT 2



ACT 2

SCENE 1

He walks down Evening Lane. See Thelma driving in a racing stripe in the distance. Norman enters through roomer stairs and greets

Norman: Nothing for me man, I'm going to Phillip's sister's place for dinner.

Thelma: You're not so much lucky. I'm staying to think you're already married.

Norman: Have you seen my first truck?

Thelma: Have a look out the window. *Charmers come in, reach and finish hair drink. She begins brushing hair. Thelma not married already are you?*

Norman: What?

Thelma: You know what I mean?

Norman: Ah, so it's not with you man?

Thelma: Ah, long as that's what you say to Phillip.

Norman: Must be good news, huh?

Thelma: Well you wouldn't want Phillip to lose respect for you — man do you know **Norman:** How do you know what?

Thelma: Look around.

Norman: Have you and Ed been fighting?

Thelma: No.

Norman: Then are you in the shoes of a cold war?

Thelma: He still hasn't paid the second money.

Norman: Give him time.

Thelma: He's had no time.

Norman: They can't expect him you know — Phillip told us they're in it.

Thelma: So what does that prove?

Norman: That he knows what he's doing.

Thelma: Norman, I've had to put up with approximately phone calls and letters and the morning two of me didn't reach due I talk to one at the supermarket oh enjoy Gladys *Thelma: when and there was no work on their table this week because her line had to walk off the job earlier than week with poor father*

Norman: If they want to go hungry that's their business, they can work with it did it they want.

Thelma: But they don't want to work of them **Norman:** Then they can't complain about not getting paid.

Thelma: Frank told me when he really making them and is your father going paid and the rest of the gang not getting anything.

Norman: Well they should come to their senses then.

Thelma: You mean your father should? You could do something you could see Norman. Father, well he used to be known as you.

Norman: Years ago.

Thelma: Well I'm sure if you spoke to him a would help.

Norman: I'm not interfering man — besides it's up to Ed and you. *There is a knock on the*

door. **Norman:** That will be Phillip. She can and cannot with Phillip. **Phillips:** Glad meeting Mr. Norman.

Thelma: Hello Phillip.

Norman: I'll just get my bag.

He comes through lounge door.

Phillips: That's excellent — what is it?

Thelma: Fresh air — you must come for us again soon.

Phillips: Yes.

Thelma: Tell me when do you make of this thing with my husband?

Phillips: Do you really want to know?

Thelma: Of this or of you asked about it?

Phillips: Well it's a little bit both — I'm sorry it means.

Thelma: I know and I agree totally totally.

Norman:

Phillips: Look, I'm dreadfully sorry, but all this is Union business. I shouldn't even be making a comment on it. This thing could have an effect on the outcome of things in the port that's what worries me?

Thelma: Yes, of course. I shouldn't have asked you. I'm sorry. *There is the familiar knock of a hand on the back door.* Come in. **Norman:** I've been with you. Frank enters from back door with a bunch of imported goods under his arm. He takes the envelope.

Frank: Guess you lost love?

Norman: Yes — not a woman and sure is sure.

Frank: Looks as if Phillip here is too good?

Phillips: Look — thanks.

Frank: *He Phillip:* You know I'm started to like you.

Phillips: That's nice of you.

Frank: I know it is. Hey Thelma get a little bit of bloody a tomorrow the Captain's compliments to you.

He puts in the drinks on the table.

Norman: Don't you get tired of having yourself around?

Frank: No look the competition's good for me — oh come on I'm sorry that all look thing with Phillip and I was over again. Phillip and me are good mates now aren't we? *He shapes up as a So they come to Phillip. Phillip doesn't answer suddenly more aggressively.* Aren't we?

Phillips: *He looks at them.*

Frank: What did I tell you?

Norman: Well we've got to go!

Norman and Phillip begin to go.

Frank: Paid your bonus — want all you hear what I've got to tell you.

Thelma: He's paid that money?

Frank: No he can't say where it is. He won't in the glass house.

Thelma: He won't believe, said he had some trouble in the would you believe.

Norman: We haven't got all night — what's the news?

Frank: That's it. Here on the news and you'll learn.

Thelma: The news?

Frank: Yes. He goes on TV and watches at night.

Norman enters.

Thelma: The TV news is over to come on. *Frank enters alone alone.*

Frank: Should be on in a minute.

Thelma: What is it?

Frank comes out the moment.

Frank: Wasn't a TV set in the family. Bob made the big news. He's big news, says Thelma. He's big news. He's down to every now and then. Wanted to go some pictures of Bob walked into the job and he's going walking off the Parker walkie (he was that). So they got one of Bob with a clip in the background. He got a piece of him. I see, can you imagine Bob on TV?

Thelma: You change with the wind you do?

Frank: Hang on Thelma, neither should you in the most powerful Union in Australia. Are they got me back that is really something that is.

Norman: Don't go your Union hear you're that.

Frank: *Laughing not could.* No worries, it's a storm in a glass of it all be over soon. But what I was going to say this TV set is good to do. Bob good look him up. Get people to tell me. I'll tell you themselves. There's more than a few of the Union. Martin to tell sorry for that. Martin. Norman's been too heavy on him. Yeah, he might say so.

Thelma: Well it's not a game of who's to?

Frank: He's got a piece of cricket that is sure, but I'll tell you it's a bloody good game. I'll tell you — sorry long to keep there it is. My gun on TV and news is close up.

Int. voice: And the six weeks now in writing would be called a week more. Mr. Norman, please, the what? When the machine is called? *Thelma:* I'll be waiting to give the new dollar key?

Bob B. get an umbrella to make the love.

Norman.

Int. voice: But when you go too far?

Bob B. I say?

Int. voice: Is it true the matter is in the Federal Secretary's hands now?

Bob B. Maybe. I wouldn't know that.

Int. voice: Why wait? I say?

Bob enters on this point in some of the news of the day and starts watching the TV.

Int. voice: He's a power money they say.

Int. voice: He is?

Bob B. Look.

Int. voice: But it's worth being and is certainly he?

Bob: I want to say that just I want.

Int. voice: But not worth it?

Bob: — And he that I say that and he's a man, I don't.

Int. voice: He you're not backing down on that?

Bob: Mind, such I'm not.

Int. voice: I see, well thank you Mr. Norman. This is some What is reporting from the news and news and news and news.

Frank: *He Bob:* You're really on your own now man — focus up, money? — you're really



Tristan: A Set That Began An Era

Shadripts suggests that Decca's 1962 issue of a recording of *Tristan and Isolde* conducted by Georg Solti began an era. It is true that Decca had begun an unparalleled complete recording of *The Ring* slightly earlier than this, but Decca's slightly had the greater impact when it first appeared because it was a complete work and generated no speculation as to how an unfinished project might continue. The revelation of *Tristan* was, first of all, the quality and immediacy of the orchestral sound. Decca received some criticism at the time for placing the orchestra so far forward in perspective; and for tanning to mangle it in equal terms with the voices of the soloists. Up to them, I think it is true to say, most opera recordings had tended to give clear priority to the voices and to set the orchestra some distance further back in the aural perspective of the whole. This reinforced to the impression of an opera given in actual performance to a number of famous opera houses, where the profiles of the soloists in a deeply recessed pit inevitably draw help vocals to stand out more prominently.

Decca, and in particular its producer John Culshaw were not seeking to reproduce an opera house performance (not to achieve something new in the way of balance and perspective. This new ideal recognised the opportunities as well as the limitations of the recording studio and sought to take positive advantage of them instead of apologising for them or minimising them. It was as if the listener was being offered a chance to hear and stand to all components of the opera with maximum intimacy, to some extent in the way that a very skilled score reader might pace the work together in his own imagination. The orchestra could be heard as unprecedentedly intimate, but there was no fear that the score would be lost as a result. Fine adjustments in recording balance and the ability of voices recording to present different streams of sound simultaneously without necessarily allowing one to be swamped provided the technical means for this to be achieved.

The second revelation of the new set was an extension of the first: it became clear that Decca had adopted a policy of presenting *Tristan* on disc as an experience that could take advantage of resources not available in the theatre. The way that the nightingales were used for the hunting sounds at the beginning of Act Two were dropped through the texture so as to give an impression of the gradual disappearance of the hunting party into the distance would be rarely, if ever, practicable backstage in the theatre. The special colour surrounding the singing of the watching Burgesses, as if it was surrounded by some kind of acoustic haze, was another remarkable device. (It may also have been useful for the purpose of disguising or softening the rather obvious

beat in Regina Resnik's voice at the song this part).

Last obvious at the time was the fact that this recording gave a sensitive focus, Fritz Uhl, the chance to pursue Heigl Nilsson, without our feeling that his relatively small voice made him tattle for the part. In retrospect it seems as if Uhl's singing of the part of Tristan in this recording was the high point of his career. Though he went on to make many important appearances, I do not think he achieved a greater artistic success than in the Decca set of 1962. Mention of Nilsson also reminds us that we were not nearly so ready then to take the gigantic, brilliant and indomitable voice of this singer for granted. I had heard Flagstad in the theatre in her final years of hoarseness and knew what a great trouble could sound like. But the fresh strength and absolutely certain program of Nilsson through the part in this recording built on the senseless a prolonged and apparently interminable, flawless display. Solti's work with the cast and the Vienna Philharmonic enabled him to take a decisive step towards international supremacy with this recording, and the supremacy he established with the release of these discs still belongs to him as far as I am concerned. If the set has given me less pleasure in recent years, that is simply because my copy showed the scars of its early misadventure playing more and more at times went on and at playback equipment became more sensitive. Decca has meticulously re-recorded and re-mixed the set so that it can now be enjoyed in all its original glory (Decca 24415, five discs). The glory is, in fact, all the greater as because many of us will be playing it through better systems. The era that began with the Decca *Tristan* and its slightly earlier *Ring* should have seen the maturation of these sets spread through the thinking of the recording industry. It is true that many new opera sets of the present day fall far short of these recordings in their ability to make a positive merit of the studio process. Even Decca has retreated from the advanced position of some of its earlier outputs of the 1960s. That is because many recordings are undertaken without the thorough pre-planning that was adopted for *Tristan* and *The Ring* series. But the consciousness of the achievement and its function as a permanent standard and inspiration remains. One permanent legacy of the Decca technique of the 1960s, I believe, has been to make a greater prominence and closer presence of the individual stars in an opera almost universal.

John Northland's disc entitled *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Decca, re-issued on Australia by the World Record Club W 64189) might seem simply one of these crowd-pleasing abstractions of taste or judgement that are likely to catch up with most human singers from time to time. In

fact, I believe it is as central to her art as anything else she has ever put on disc. The title can be taken literally to some extent: Northland's heard some of these songs sung by her mother, who from all accounts was a mezzo soprano of great promise who was able to sing pleasingly up to the time of her death at the age of seventy-five. At least that is how her illustrious daughter remembers her; and that may be all that matters. It is apparently a fact that Northland's mother was a pupil of Ernő Wolfner, who himself studied with Marcella and Lamperti. It is not hard to deduce that Northland's great and lasting success has been built up to some extent on singing habits acquired in early childhood. Furthermore, it is very evident that Northland herself finds strength in acknowledging the singing tradition from which she comes. By that I mean the tradition of operatic song and drawing-room ballads which were the true heritage of a young singer growing up in Australia in the earlier part of this century. There is certainly no trace of conservatism in her manner or voice when she sings Amy Macphail's "Midsummer" or "I was dreaming" by the Australian composer Agnes Macphail. Macphail's "On Wings of Song", the song by Decca from which the record borrows its title, character pieces by Debussy and songs by Massenet and Grieg take their place with "Bonnie Mary of Argyle", Frank La Farge's "I Came With A Song" and Tanya Hall Macphail's "Hunting" as a programme of much charm and appeal. The greatest quality of the occasion are supplied mainly by Douglas Denby's arrangements, which do deal up the weaker numbers a little. Richard Borgeas conducts the New Philharmonia Orchestra and the original recording was obviously skillfully made.

Karajan's new recording of the nine symphonies of Beethoven (Philips 2740 172-24 eight discs) will shortly be issued, I understand, as a series of single discs. I have been enjoying the boxed set for its unusually varied quality and consistency of sound in this music and for the usually balanced and immediate performance given by Karajan with his marvellous Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. In case memorabilia should sound like a term of abuse, I should add that the performances in general have all the strength and vigour that most listeners expect to find in satisfying recordings of the Beethoven symphonies. I was slightly disappointed with Karajan's reading of the fourth symphony, and many listeners are bound to prefer this or that recording of one of the symphonies. I cannot think of any other set, however, which is as well recorded as this throughout or as consistent in performance and style. The set rises to its greatest heights in an abnormally outstanding account of the ninth symphony.



The Australian Dance Theatre is now one year old. Having performed eight seasons collectively in South Australia and Victoria, pursued together an avowedly large repertoire and discovered already a couple of choreographic talents within its own ranks, one would say that by now large it is self supporting. Having a local audience (steadily growing) also helps.

I hear that some audiences may have made the wrong judgement on the strength of the American choreographers' music that was the ADT offering for the Festival, for it was too one and for many audiences a deep disappointment, and as far as the company is concerned, definitely unrepresentative.

Why the decision was made to have an all American program I don't know, but to have four works, two of them "light" and two "heavy" particularly when the people involved are not really of the broad rank, strikes me as artistic and box office insanity. Far better to have had a wider selection with at least one Australian work. Since the new ideal of the Adelaide Festival is to have Australian works, one would have thought that the ADT, being more flexible might have taken the lead, using that the SATC and the State Opera had it.

One's one would have been diluted if the works seen were of some worth but only one or two of them were anywhere near keeping. There are lots of good to great American creators to choose from all of widely divergent styles. People like Henry Chappell, Jonathan Miller, Robert Wilson, Elliot Feld, Louis Falco and Tanya Tanya, but surely it is Australian choreographers that should be given the chance to try and beat before all these comparable overseas people?

On the strength of her first work for the ADT, Sara Saghamura I venture to suggest, is best left to let her gaze a bit and does contain not as a choreographer. She and the company could be better served by getting her out here for a prolonged season to work within the company and improve her work as it goes along. Saghamura's price I has a lot less potential than some pieces by Australian based creators who are still writing in the backblocks for attention.

F is increasingly thoroughway, and that is about the best thing that could be done with it. With a net comprising a row of low stools and a projected back drop of Mount Fuji that has little to do with anything, the piece is one of those works that wonder around endlessly looking for a form and a framework.

The rest of live wear black kimonos over coloured tights and one of the cast is always ideologically out of sync with the events, a renegade that precipitates much thinking and frothing about from the others. But since the renegade isn't true to

type, she throws off the kimonos and generally makes a nuisance of herself and then goes straight into a very ordinary dance sequence, so any sense of character goes for a burst. The rest of the dance sequences aren't that interesting either, being of the drop, kick, stretch, bend variety that twiddles on by fits and starts, shrugs and postures flayed by an ironic sapping brightness. The ADT dancers performed it with an acute lack of aplomb on their faces which is about all they could do poor things.

When Yoriko's *Chidoriwa* popped up, I thought that there must be something in Japanese lady choreographers that made them so optimistic and wistfully joyful, something that I had missed. *Chidoriwa* has much the same sort of anecdotal, athletic fireworks but it is at least had the saving grace of patterning that was attractive and dynamic. Totally pleasant, it was witty, shiny and a little self congratulatory, peppered with long leaps, jumps and oval hand footwork. The music was a Yoriko concerto which always makes me suspicious. So many folk talents use that style of music with lots of busy notes so they can cram lots of busy little steps into it, hiding themselves that they possess a learned choreographic technique. Yoriko's skill however saved it from becoming a part little routine number. During the finale the dancers reflected around with notes in their hands, placing them in a vase at the end, a wistfully much that did nothing for me for the ballet.

More interesting, and not just because of its more "serious" subject matter, was Cliff Keeler's *For One Who Died Young*.

Someone told me that that was not the title that Keeler had composed for his younger brother who had been killed by a motor's bullet on Malibu beach, but it looked like it to me.

The work begins with a clutch of dancers gathered over the corpse of a young man. They utter calls and screams into the void, fall into twisted heaps of escape and self protection, none of them wanting to take the blame for what happened. They moulder as a dance phrase are passed from one to the other, growing to create an accumulation, a feeling of collective and personal loss, phrases that pool away to reveal each of them alone whilst together. They all realize that it could have happened to them and one day might. The corpse Lazarus-like comes to life and rears through the group as if haunting them or trying to give comfort, but none will be comforted. As the ghost flutters through this gait ridden group, time and sequence loop in on themselves, past and present intermingling, while fact, history and memory become tangled.

In fact there are too many tangled strands in the work. The sense of loss and

guilt is immediately conveyed, but the physical and emotional impact of the event on each person isn't all that clearly illustrated, it remains essentially just an event, a fraction and a group recollection. Perhaps it is too large and the material goes more time to work itself out, those strands could have been more intricately undertaken. As it was, if it wasn't for the commitment and edge intensity that the ADT dancers brought to it, *For One Who Died Young* could have slinked into a store of nervous waiting, ripe for the analyst's couch.

But mention of the coherence of the dancers in this work brings me to the music of the major dance piece of the program, Keeler's *Field* remained remote and enigmatic. Most of the dancers were confused and didn't quite know what it was supposed to be saying. Most of the company's dancers are classically trained; they do not yet have enough (dramatic) stage experience, but have been taught to tell the product as dancers is what to do. That distinction makes all the difference in such an introspective and lyrical work as this. To say that *Field* trends deep into Eugene O'Neill country is to exaggerate it slightly, but it is laced with O'Neill's cumulative power, his guilt and obsessive aim and his Italian/son low/bare themes.

The idea of *Field* is simple and timeless, that of a son leaving the family for the first time and the web of memory, love and power that will bind him. The family as such is peripheral, existing only to focus the father/son struggle for dominance and/or release. One sees the event through both their eyes, of the son seeing childhood struggles, of the father seeing his past through his son and the memory becoming too much. The dance for the two men are at times tender and gentle, coloured by simple lifts and touching balances, at others they become a grapple, fought battles for domination.

A clue to the work is the music chosen, being pieces by Gustav Mahler, ("Song of the Earth"), Richard Lindner (his movement from the 3rd symphony). All of these songs deal with remembrance, joy, sorrow, transience and loss.

Blake Brown as the son and Joe Soglia as the father are obviously good actors/dancers, otherwise the theme of Italian/son would never have come across. They were father and son locked into an interior struggle, not a couple of homosexuals having a spat as it could have appeared in lesser hands, the rest of the company should take its cues from them.

Things are bound to improve once the work settles into repertoire, it is a continual performance of works like this that make them live, not just rehearsal.

Being limited by space, the only other mention of the ADT's Festival season I can

ment is the choreography for the *Alfred Danvers* that Jonathan Taylor choreographed for the production of *The Misadventures of Mrs. Danvers*. I was not aware of any differentiation or program in them as any of them, but that might have been partially the lack of the singularly tedious (and dangerous) set of John Corvino, cluttered with glad wrap debris and four ply fly pads at the widest angles. Nevertheless, despite the ungrateful and cramped conditions it was only these dances that conveyed any feeling of exhilaration and wonderment in which the opera is supposed to abound.

Of the other offerings of the Festival, all the smaller experimental groups from Sydney I will talk about later, when space permits. To the Kabuki Theatre, a western critic is immaterial. I simply kept writing I could have seen the entirety in Japan itself. Capitalist critics like those rarely travel well, as even for Peter Danvers admitted. The much lauded Polish Music Ballet Theatre was a disastrous bore. Simplistic scenes, repetitious choreography and a total lack of energy and misanthropic joy and total despair (all themes central to both the *Bach* and *Thomson*) made this tedious production one of the most depressing and yawn inducing evenings I have ever sat through. Given the same

theme, why of our own companies could have done a better job (unless Graeme Murphy's *Peggy* of which more next time).

Of the works in the first programme of the Australian Ballet's Sydney season, Jon Kligman's *Symphony in D* and Louis Falco's *Caravan* were selected by Anne Woodman. Frederick Ashton's *The Dream* was selected by Dame Peggy van Praagh. In none of the upcoming works in the season, this speaks volumes to me. Despite Susan's *Spartacus* being the big exception, many members of the AB are apprehensive about a return to the bad old days when the AB was having the style of the Royal Ballet forced upon it, a style that just does not sit well in the home town. Our company has its own manner and outlook, one which is gutsy, masculine and dramatic, not elegant, effete and as posed as the Royal. Any attempts to "refine" the AB will be a disaster.

This was perfectly obvious to me, with the production of *The Dream* a work that is the epitome of "English" lyric dancing. It should be airy, elegant and courtly, but here it wasn't, it was laboured, manner and underwhelming.

Falco's *Caravan* is more in tune with the AB attitude, it dances and settles, it is

literate and highly strong, but it is not directionless or empty. It is simply a collection of dances done by people as male dancers designed to distract or engage. It is "about" the Cosmos of life, the moments we fill up with action to subvert boredom, dances of discovery, sexuality and aspiration. Every dancer in the work put the last ounce of energy that he had into it. Despite the free form, it is severely structured and experienced. People should realize that a serious work is not serious just by virtue of its subject matter but by the thought that has gone into it. Working in an unfamiliar show, the AB dancers acquitted themselves with tenacity and conviction.

Some goes for Kligman's *Symphony in D*, a work that refines all the heavy conventions of classical ballet. Even if one doesn't know a lot of classical ballet one can still get the point of the tongue-in-cheek commentary, all those Burke-like, one-timed retreats, tangled partnerships and little bits of scene stealing. Only one criticism here, the wit has to be exact to make its point, the "mistakes" should be obviously meant, sometimes they weren't and the audience was left wondering whether or not some of the gaffs and faux pas' were intentional.

the dance company 1978 season

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Ten and Thirty years on.



Melissa Chappell (Flora), Marijnn Richardson (Governor) and Alexander Gibbs (Miles) in UNSW's *Turn of the Screw*

Thirty years after its first production, Sydney's suburban, Rockdale Municipal Opera Company is still going strong, ten years after its debut production, so is Roger Cowell's University of New South Wales Opera.

In the past couple of years, they have all but monopolised the Sydney opera scene below the olympian heights of the national company itself: only the odd student production at the NSW Conservatorium and the even rarer brief season or odd performance of major theatre has supplanted their offerings.

Both these companies began their 1978 seasons within a week of each other in mid-April, and with works utterly typical of the peculiar repertory mix which has enabled them to survive and keep on surviving where other scratch companies have come and gone.

The UNSW Opera was first off the mark with an amazingly successful new production of Benjamin Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* (which is based, of course, on the Henry James novella of the same name), Rockdale's offering was the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Princess of the Guard*.

The University company's distinctive mix encompasses the old, the new and the off-beat, Rockdale's the standard repertory, the tried and true audience-pleasing C and S pieces, and slightly off beat but thoroughly accessible pieces such as little-known Offenbach operettas.

The UNSW company officially was celebrating its 10th anniversary by staging the latter work it presented as its inaugural production, and in the event the 1978 performances were even more akin to the 1968 ones than originally announced.

The director of Beverly Bergen, who had been engaged for the role of the governess

this past, meant that Marijnn Richardson — who made her operatic debut in that role in the original production — again appeared in the part. Pearl Berridge, who originally sang the role of Mrs Grose, the housekeeper in 1968, again played the part this year, and Cowell, of course, was again mounting the buses.

It was said that the opening performance was marred by highly sensitive lighting through no fault of the production team, or at least very little: the minute reconstruction of the equipment at the University's Summer Theatre were confounded by the fact that a production company spent last minute preparations for the opera. The result was very weird, giving the impres-

sion rather that somebody was trying to be very arty or that some chub-bested cat was twinning about backstage tripping up over the tangled cords and switches.

Meantime, the production was very strong indeed, particularly in the adult scenes (department) which after all must bear the brunt of the attention of any audience.

Richardson was in revelling form vocally and dramatically, she and Ronald Dowd, who was a marvellous Quint, shared the vocal honours without any doubt. Berridge's housekeeper and Patricia Brown's governess were more than adequate, but neither merited the dramatic attention or produced the exciting vocal scenes of Richardson and Dowd.

Alexander Gibbs acquitted himself admirably in the role of the boy Miles, a part difficult just about to the point of impossibility, dramatically he was thoroughly credible, but he was vocally ignorant in the manner of all but the most gifted boy sopranos. Melissa Chappell was close to perfection as the girl Flora, although an inference it must be noted that Flora is a much less pivotal and demanding part.

Perhaps the big troubles with this *Turn of the Screw* arose directly from the inherent impossibilities of the piece itself, which requires phenomena visible only in the mind of one character to be given credence — at least to some extent — vocal reality. One was a good deal too conscious of the contrivance involved in the usual reduction of the ghostly characters.

Parly this was no doubt the fault of the last minute lighting crisis, but the appearances were in general marred in an altogether too humbly mannered manner. First and foremost the idea of having them appear from the breach of the stage or from the gaps of the audience, the children



Melissa Chappell (Flora), Pearl Berridge (Mrs Grose) and Marijnn Richardson (Governor) in UNSW's *Turn of the Screw*

realisation of the effects was all but impossible because of the inherent pace of the music itself, which in any opera inevitably dictates the pace of the stage action.

Occasionally, then *Force of the Seven* was very good but not as impressive as Correll sometimes has managed in the past. As an overall operatic event it more than deserved the three capacity audiences it had at Kensington, though, and it was quite a good curtain-raiser, as it were, for the second decade of the most ambitious, active and artistically successful university opera group in Australia.

The Rockdale *Footmen of the Guard* was neither disappointing nor exhilarating in the context of the usual standards of this most serious of Australian opera groups.

Two things in particular struck me about the performance, the extent of more than the usual quota of new and unfamiliar faces in the ranks of the cast and the recurrence of so many of the personal flaws — particularly orchestral ones — that have marred every performance I have ever attended at the Rockdale Town Hall.

I cannot but record my disappointment that so much orchestral sloppiness is tolerated in the Rockdale context, for I am sure the players are capable of better than they produced at times in this *Footmen*. Sometimes they played very well, so that when enough is achieved that a little better bearing down from the conductor, Cedric Ashwin, might not only have produced finer playing but would quite probably not even have been noticed by the musicians.

Among the soloists of the night only John Wirth (Lugwig (Colonel Purkin)) and Mary Blake (Diana Carruthers) and Rhip Daniel (Sergeant Meryll) were Rockdale regulars. All acquitted themselves very well, in particular Blake, advancing years have robbed her singing voice of some of its power of port, but she is an unusual manner of the vocal and dramatic subtleties of the G and S dragon roles.

Wendy Oliver (Eliza) and Sylvia Byrne (Peggy), whose faces are a good deal less familiar on the Rockdale stage, were both adequate. John Collett had almost the optimum mix of blarney, stupidity, glibness and heartless cruelty to make the most out of the diabolic role of Wilfred Shallock (the head pater and virtuous hypocrite).

But the unquestionable triumph of the night was David Goddard's Jack Point. Those who saw him at Rockdale as a superb Little Professor in Offenbach's *Le Perichole* a couple of years ago will need no convincing of his basic talents, and in this present role he was magnificent. Had the rest of the cast been as effective as he, this would have been a *Footmen* to treasure for a good many years to come.

Both the current offerings of The Australian Opera programme for children (*Opera for Kids*) have a good deal of merit partly as environments for infants and primary school children.

So the *Sergeant Who Married to Top* (music by Malcolm Fox, words by him and Susan Vais) is sung for the little ones, *Professor Kibbel's Kismet* (*Kismet*) (music by Jeff Correll, words by Richard Dancy) is aimed at a slightly more mature audience.

Sid is a pastiche of varied musical styles pasted rather loosely by an episode



Bernadette Carter, Cedric Ashwin and Judy Glen in the AGO's *Sid the Sergeant*. Photo: William Morley.

story line which was the bare trespassing around the globe in search of a place to sing. *Kibbel* is more complex as its story line, and contains a rather delightful, if a little cynical, message that tends to annoy rather than convert.

As one would expect, both are most professionally done and each provides a good alternative to an hour of classroom schooling. What relevance they have to opera education, however, I do not know, manifestly they please rather than enlighten, dramatically they are at best adequate. I cannot help thinking that the best introduction to opera is opera itself, even the very young can accept it at face value, do not require to have it sugar-coated and weighed down either musically or dramatically.

By far the best effort I have seen in this direction is the tailored-down version of

Scott's *Barber of Seville* by John Thompson, executive director of the Queensland Opera Company. It involves only a handful of singers and a set that can be packed into a trailer towed by a hand truck around the State.

But every note of the music is unadorned *Rossini*, including the misadventure audience participation dirty laughs to the children when music master Radio steps comically out of character. The kids love it just as much as they love *Sid* and *Professor Kibbel*. Portions of other proper operas could obviously be treated the same way.

In their own way, *Sid* and *Kibbel* are just fine, but if we are really trying to expose the young to opera in the hope they will come to embrace it and love it eventually, do they go about it the right way?

Living drama from the words on a page.



Melissa Jaffer (Vi) and John Waters (Rabbit) in *Weekend Of Shadows*

The thing that strikes me immediately about *Weekend of Shadows* is its truthfulness. It's a bit below the belt, the nearest thing to *Wade in Purple* that the Australian film industry has produced. I don't guess that the bad news is necessarily "true" than the good news, but that the co-producer and director, Tom Jeffrey has taken the film script (by Peter Yeldham from Hugh Alderson's novel *The Rocking of the Boat*) and got it right, without fudging.

On the face of it that may sound more negative than positive, but it's not so. By being in the line — no passion for sentimentality or even endorsement — he has actually created living drama from the words on a page.

Hugh Alderson's novel was set in NSW, in a town with a quarry, somewhere around, I suppose, the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Jeffrey moved the locality to Macleodfield in South Australia, possibly because the SA Film Corporation was paying up some of the money, with their Mark Carroll as co-producer (with Sue Mitchell). Macleodfield and environs is simply perfect, non-picturesque, the period props are sparse and nostalgic, never gets a look-in.

The story is about two people unacceptable to a small community: a Polish

immigrant, illegal or otherwise (the time is between the wars, when Hitler was a tidal wave of people from Europe in our shores) and Harry Baker, nicknamed Rabbit, who isn't very bright. The Pole is alien by definition, Rabbit alien because he isn't one of the boys and has a history of delinquency. For one thing, when Vi, a cheerful, precocious girl, who in those days and that place was probably known as the "town biter" because pregnant boys were drawn to it, to which of her gangy girlfriends would carry her to give the child a name, and Rabbit drew the short straw. They married, the child was born, and the small family drew together protectively against the rest of the world.

One sunny spring Saturday the town's only industry, the brickworks, closes at noon and the men depart for the pub, except Rabbit, who goes home to Vi and the boy. In a few moments the place is alive with savage rumour: a youth looking for a girlfriend near a house on the edge of the town has found Daisy Taylor lying on the barn floor, chopped into a heap of red flesh by someone wielding a cleaver. The police decide Daisy was done to death by the Pole who lived in the barn and helped with the chickens in exchange for a roof over his head. He is missing.

A search, significant title, is organised

The scriptant orders the men to put their noses down to go on the hunt, and all do, except Rabbit. Later Vi, whose life is made difficult because of Rabbit's "otherness", persuades him to do the same. She wants to walk down the street in the knowledge that her Rabbit is a man among men.

Led by the sergeant, the men — Nelson, Bernie Collins, Rossie, Badger, Ryan etc — take to the surrounding hills. Also Rabbit, whose secret appropriation to a friend is Nelson, who is his neighbour. They stay out in the country, growing, hunting, fantasising about what they will do to the Pole when they get him. Ryan recalls that the Pole once made an ill-advised appearance at the local pub and asked Ryan's wife to dance while Ryan was sitting bare at the back of the hall, he received for this country a terrible beating-up (not to mind all, and Ryan plans to report the punishment). Only Rabbit and the school teacher, who is along more because he is a straggler for the nearest newspaper than due to any relish for the search — suggest that perhaps the Pole didn't kill Mrs Taylor.

The men started by enjoying the hunt, but it turns sour when the drink runs out and the sergeant bullies them. The sergeant also started out by enjoying it, as a means to promotion, but he also begins



John Waters as Harry "Rabbit" Baker.

to wit:

It goes bad for the women, too. Vi is distraught with worry, the sergeant's wife, who saw the operation as a way out from country side, hides behind her lace curtains as the women come knocking at her door to find out what has happened to

their men who seem to be gone for only a few hours. The little town is wounded, a full afflicted wound. Authentic in the form of a suspense novel is annoyed because it hasn't been alerted. A threat of deeper troubles between the men at the battle and the women in the town.

We have seen some gunnicks acting in great films, but here the producers/director have been honest as well as, in some cases, positively inspired. The character of Rabbit, based on the possibly false promise that those who look back, or perhaps all those movies, are mysteriously "in tune" with nature, is played by John Waters. He expands this promise acceptably, acquiring confidence and grace to match his knowledge of the bush.

Melissa Laffer, an actress who has often seemed unsympathetic to her roles, understands this one perfectly. Wyn Roberts, an actor good at persona, plays the sergeant who was killed from the city when he shot two youths dead in a moment of overconfidence without actually being sure they had committed a crime. His out-wardly placid, inwardly rigid wife Helen is played by Barbara West with the right precision. Among the rest of the cast Graham Kemp stands out as Nolan, an earnest vicar. Bill Hunter as Simon, trapper happy, a dangerous driver. Kit Taylor as Ryan; Les Fennell as Roger the cawler; Graham Barclay as a kind of parody of a sheepdog, napping any passing fox.

It is hard to say what Australian audiences, or at least my audience, will make of this. There is a dark ending, but the theme can hardly be called anything but cheerful, and one remembers the local message to Wake in Angles. It can be assumed that people like to see themselves as men, and in *Workload of Shadows* not many of them are men.

The film is beautifully photographed by Richard Whalley. Another plus is Charles Mawson's soothing music.

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Defining the drama of the seventies.

The Club — David Williamson
 Distributed in Australia by Cambridge
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Currency Press has come a long way in the last ten years. From the first, unimpressive series of volumes, sold by subscription to students and academics, they have grown to become Australia's major drama publisher, having their rivals (Hutchinson, Penguin, Edward Arnold, Heinemann and QUP) far in the background. With the early series there was a hint of snipping around the plays to justify the enterprise. The new batch of plays show how Currency and Australian playwrighting have prospered. Currency now has forty-two titles. They have begun a series of New Zealand plays in association with Pinter Publishers, called *Tasman Plays*. The distributor *Theatre Quarterly* plays here (while *TQ* distributes Currency plays in the United Kingdom). And they have branched out into general publishing, on a small scale, with a volume of cartoons by Australia's virtual cartoonist, Patrick Cook.

It is fitting, and nice for Currency, that they should now add to their list *Summer of the Sensitive* by David Williamson. It is the complete David trilogy (the first year, *The Club* is almost too much of a "classic" title. It should be in Currency's National Theatre series) and it is only in the last few years that it has stopped looting over us, a bad example for theatre managers and playwrights alike. Now we can look back and see if the club it was — not the beginning of a new start for Australian drama, but the end of an era, bringing the book legend into the city and laying it fairly to rest. It is not such a lie to rest the baggy, by now notorious, off Australia's Nationalism, then that it hardly Lawler's best.

The Currency edition contains an interesting introduction by Katherine Bushman and a great deal of useful material from the original production — reviews and photographs. I cannot agree entirely with Ms Bushman's reading of the play. She argues that seeing the Club to part of the trilogy changes slightly our approach to it, but it is a risk possible to see it as a celebration of Clive's dream rather than a revelation of her childlikeness. There is an immense overestimated loss by the end, but that merely intensifies the play's tribute to her idealism. Her rejection of Joe's proposal thus becomes, as Anne Summers argues, the only proper womanly response, after seventeen years of self-sacrifice, and not a childish refusal to bow down to the gloomy realities of life.

The Club is another sign of the stability of Australia's playwrighting and of Currency Press. David Williamson's plays keep coming out, and each before the criticism that he is becoming too established, or too accustomed or too popular. His humour, his insight and his craftsmanship speak for themselves so strongly in the theatre that there is little which can be said of the book. It is good that we have lost our self-consciousness about Australian plays to an extent where a play is published simply as that people who enjoyed the show can find their favourite bits again.

This is not the case with Peter Kraus. Kraus has kept up on us rather and the publishers of those three plays gave us an opportunity to try and see how *With A Sharp God* and now with *The Candy Album* built up from *A Hard God*. He has found an established place in theatre, but on the whole he has never been a popular or an often-produced writer. The three plays in this volume have all had small productions but they have had little impact in the theatre generally. Finally,

then, they are published in an expensive hard-cover, which serious students of drama who wish to see some of Kraus's earlier work, will want to buy. This is a pity in a way, for Kraus is an important writer whose particular exploration of family life should be interesting to everyone. He has a rare feeling of detached involvement, as if everyday life were an exercise to which his characters (and he and his audience) are passively committed, but which is a more surface representation of a deeper reality lurking beneath. This is precisely the world of his "hard god" in which people "have to struggle on blindly with his mercy raining down on us like thunderbolt".

The first Tasman Play is *Shakespeare and Fanny*, by Joseph Massapha. It contains one that anyone would want to see or produce, but since read or publish, this brutal and offensive piece of rubbish, and yet in the theatre it has been highly successful. It is apparently the highest hit in New Zealand theatre history. This is the remoteness from the real world of people who write in magazines revealed, I cannot bring myself to call this "reprehensible but human play" which the play presents, but to be fair it is better to read than you would ever guess. From Bill Rodmans's production at the Old Tote last year. Surely the implied attacks on characters in the author's preface are directed at the Tote production. The play may perform a lot better than I imagine, given Massapha's treatment.

The last in the series of Currency Double Bills is a volume of two one-act plays by Mary Gage and Bill Shearer, both concerning the problems facing people who move into a new environment. Neither is particularly achievement but both deal effectively with the alienation and dedication of living among strangers. Mary Gage's play, particularly, concentrates the whole dilemma facing her heroine, in a neat and tightly moving theatrical statement.

Currency Press is in a position of great responsibility in Australian drama. Having a virtual monopoly they control which plays will come to general attention and which will fade into obscurity after their production. Last century in years to come, some of the '70's will be more or less defined by the plays Currency published, just as drama of the late '50's is defined now by the handful of short plays which were published then. The general range of their titles is impressive (even if the series of one-act plays looks a little conservative), it is to be hoped that Currency continues to live up to their responsibility.

GUIDE

A.G.T.

THE BARDS THEATRE RESTAURANT (H18144)

Site Arts Productions

Command Performance in honour of the visit of H. H. (Jimmy) YH on the occasion of the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia. Directed and devised by Gordon Todd, with Misses Frederick. Thursdays to Saturdays. Continuous.

CANNIBERA OPERA (H10348)

Opera in the Schools

The Hopper Mirror by Tchaikovsky. Producer: Kate Cooke, Designer: Kate Barker. Touring ACT schools and Juby.

CANNIBERA THEATRE (H11085)

London Theatre Company

East by Steve Berkoff. Director: Steve Berkoff. 26 May - 2 June.

The Australian Ballet

Joan Laid

7, 10, 12, 13 May

CHILDREN'S STREET HALL (H9-478)

Corporate Productions

World Jewellery on *Baroness Ann* by Roger Palfrey. Directed by Adrian Gifford. On tour from Newcastle. 14 - 24 June.

HUMAN COMPANY (H1011)

In memory of Art New, a documentary for adults, on/off presentation in the ACT, *Crumpet and Co.*, a participative play for children. *The Empty House*, a participative play for preschool. *Prometheus*, a participative play for primary schools. Various locations.

PLAYHOUSE (H11689)

California Philharmonic Society

The Sound of Music. 29 June - 1 July.

THEATRE 3117-4223

The Department by David Williamson. Director: Anne Conolly Smith. 7 June - 1 July.

TINOLI THEATRE RESTAURANT (H1111)

Canadian Professional Group

Wonderful Capers. Directed by Tania Taylor and John Newman. Director: John Newman. Fridays and Saturdays. Continuous.

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACTOR'S COMPANY (H20150)

Manon and Jules. by William Shakespeare, directed by Steve Ayres, with Kate Ferguson and Dallas Lewis. To June 18.

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams,

directed by Railway Delaney, with Betty Ched and De'Gloria. From June 19.

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES (H16112)

The Camel Ash returns a musical comedy movement stage created and directed by Philip Edman. New South Wales country tour from June 12.

Mixal Mishal a country rock group. New South Wales country tour from June 19.

Struck by Anthony Shaffer, with Sydney Castlere and Shere Parsons. New South Wales country tour from June 1.

Schools Tour *Star of Sea* Contemporary Semaphore Quartet with Colin Smith, Sydney metropolitan area.

Harlequinade with Helen Roland Brown with metropolitan area. Sydney metropolitan, South Coast and Riverina areas. *Rob Wilson* - metropolitan, piggyback and musician. Riverina and Sydney metropolitan areas. *Alto Head* - guitar and singer. Hunter Valley and North Coast areas. *Koolhaas and Major Mongoose* by Tony Wright. Sydney metropolitan area.

AUSTRALIAN OPERA (H2-2078)

Madam Butterfly by Puccini (in Italian). June 14, 17, 20, 23, 25.

Merry-go-round by Mozart (in English).

June 24, 26.

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (H9-912)

Knights by Richard Tulkoff, directed by Des Eyre - for adult schools.

The Fabulous Egghead by Richard Tulkoff, directed by Jane Westwood.

Running Away by Michael Cope, directed by Raymond Ormrod.

The Actor at Work in *Orlando and Aladdin* and *Jules*. Directed by Raymond Ormrod.

North West Arts. 72.

ENSEMBLE THEATRE (H20117)

Spooking by Stewart Parker. Directed by Don Rod. From June 1.

FRANK STRAIN'S GULL 'N' BUSH

THEATRE RESTAURANT (H1-482)

Midge of Fennel with Neil Brophy, Keith Burrell, John Fetherston, Noel Bryant and Alan Norman. Directed by Frank Strain, choreographed by George Landon.

GANGES THEATRE (H17-312)

First Step of the Sea, by Peter Shaffer, directed by Tony Hays. To June 24.

HIS MAJESTY'S (H12-1111)

Barry Houghton in *Barry O'Farrell* at *His Majesty*.

June.

MARLBOROUGH (H9-1164)

What Every Woman Knows by James Baines,

directed by Alana Duman. From June 9.

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA (H17-1438)

Whisper the Dandelion directed by Richard Beckett and Steve Hanson. Three week Sydney seasons include tour.

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT (H9-8232)

Created by Steve Hanson and directed by Michael Roddy. Continuous.

MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (H7-6282)

Ensemble a musical revue starring the Toppens Family and Lee Young.

NEW THEATRE (H9-1483)

The Rustle Across Mirror Show by John Rowland and the APT, directed by Paul Quare with musical director, John Short and designer, Rob Eadie. To mid June.

Feeling the Darkness by Kevin Morgan directed by John Armstrong. From last June.

NIMROD THEATRE (H9-6082)

Uppass Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare, directed by John Bell. To June 15.

Henry IV by William Shakespeare, directed by Richard Wharton, with Joan Bell, Frank Wilson and Alexander Hay. From June 24.

NO 15 THEATRE RESTAURANT

Al Capone's Birthday Party by Pat Garvey, directed and produced by Pat Garvey, choreography by Keith Lusk, set by Doug Anderson, costumes by Ray Wilson. Continuous.

OLD TOFF (H20-112)

Deana Thaw *The Mountie* by Wilson, directed by Ted Crag, with Kate Ferguson, Trevor Koss, John Fair, Barry Gray, Graham Rankin, Russell Ruffell, Ben Ruffell. To June 4. *Private Theatre Co.* by Hugh Laidlaw, directed by Peter Collingwood, with Maggie Kirkman, Max Melrose, Alan Cohen, Tom Palfrey, Tom Rutherford, Don Bopple, Judith Wood. *Cher*. *Comedian*. To July 1.

PARD THEATRE (H1-994)

The Pave Company in *Andrew's Cross* by Dorothy Hewitt, with composer Ralph Tynell and lighting designer, David Reid. From June 15.

OSCAR HOLLYWOOD PALACE THEATRE RESTAURANT, Star Road

(H19-4432)

Forever Your Best *Arts* by Don Range and Peter Pave. Director: Don Range. Continuous.

Q THEATRE, Parramatta (H7-21-5715)

Ghosts by Henrik Ibsen, directed by Kevin Jackson. From June 7-25, *Backstage* June 25, July 2.

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York Theatre: *Ames and Julia* by William Shakespeare, directed by Graham Garry with the Players Theatre Company. From June 10

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE (0888)

Opera Theatre: Australian Ballet: *Programme Three: *Affaires d'un Financier* *Mardi* *Jeudi**
New work by Gennaro Marzio

Australian Opera: *Modern Songs* by Puccini, with Leona Marshall. From June 14

Measure of Pigeon by Mowat with Gloria Forsyth. From June 24

Tahitiara Hall: *Canadian Contemporary Theatre*

THEATRE ROYAL (21 8110)

Donk Fish Act 1 & 2 by Pam Goss, with Nancy Hayes, Craig Davis, Pat Bishop and Vanessa Larkin. To June 24

WHITE HORSE HOTEL, Newcastle (21 1321)

Once in a Dream by Peter Stephens, directed by Forrest Kelly, with Peter Fisher, Grant Dalzell, Julie Kelly, Emma Goss, Dennis Richards, May Houston, Sam High, Terry Muldoon, choreographer Ian Tustin. Early seats from Newcastle, designer Thompson. June

QUEENSLAND**ALTS THEATRE (26 1544)**

Run Lord Dink by Paul Kean (Mystery Theatre). Director: Margaret Brown.

May 25 to June 16
Nude with Violence by Noel Coward. Director: Margaret Goff.

June 29 - July 29

LA BOUTE (06 1472)

Cry Sugar by Stephen Prokoff. Director: Jennifer Blackledge. Designer: George Johnston, with Craig Evans as Lucy Brail. May 25 to June 17

The Good Person of Squalor by Girish Verghé, introduced by John Waters. Director: Fred Murphy. June 21 to July 12

MER MAJESTIES (21 3773)

Thoughts of Chastown Act 1 with Warren Marshall as All Gurney. In association with the Queensland Theatre Co. Commencing June 15th

QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY

(21 3841)

King Lear by William Shakespeare. Director: Alan Edwards, designer: Peter Cook, with Warren Marshall as King Lear, Ben Gohywell, Gordon Glenwright, Russell Newman and Geoff Ross

Pass of Deception by Jean Anouilh. Director: Joe MacCormac, designer: Fiona Reilly, with Alan Wilson and Garry Poole. Commencing June 21

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Director: Bryan Nason, designer: Fiona Reilly, cost by Righ Tyrrell, choreography by Keith Sam, with Cindy Raymond, Brian Blum, Michael McCaffrey, Mark Merritt, Corinnoing

TWELFTH NIGHT THEATRE (52 5816)

The Puppet People with Spring (Puppetry). Gurnell and Peter Billo. Commencing June 24

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ADLAIDE DANCE THEATRE (212 3884)
Playhouse. Series of new works. June 19 - July 1

ADFLAKE REPERTORY THEATRE

(81 3778)

51 Angus Street
The Constant Rite by Somerset Maugham, director, Philip Page. June 10-17

ADLAIDE THEATRE GROUP (267 3755)

Shakespeare: 40th Anniversary
A Woman's Fair by Shakespeare, director: Brian Debuson. June 10 to June 13

QTHEATRE (22 5644)

89 Halifax Street
Presented by Noel Coward, director: Bill O'Day. May 28 - June 17

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN THEATRE

COMPANY (21 6150)

Playhouse. ***Moby*** by Rex Blair, director, Colin Goss, designer. Axel Berger. June 1-17

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La Traviata by Verdi as Lyndale. June 28 - July 8

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New Arts Mon nights

FLYING TRAPPEE CAFE (41 3721)

Reynolds (Landscape). To June 3

The Sun Shines Show, featuring the Tasmanian Hot Shots. From June 6

HEOPLA PRODUCTIONS (62 7640)

Playbox Theatre: *Let Me In* by Ted Nelson, director, Graham Marshall. Featuring Allan Aspin, Peter Cummins, Michael Gifford, Anne (Pieris) Marat. Ratched. Commencing

Upstairs. Directed by Graham Marshall. By Graham Marshall. To June 17

The Extraordinary by Sam Wilson. From June 21

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Comedy Theatre. ***Love This Night*** with Jack Sweetland and Nina Baden-Semper. To July 7

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT

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New show opening June 3 not announced

I AMARIA (260 4482)

Love of Port by Ian Nally. Directed by Emma Scott. Saturday June 1-16. Thurs. Sat 8:00 p.m. Arts & plays by Graham Marshall. To July 9

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

(260 6000)

Rough Street Theatre. Experimental by Marjorie Rothwell. Directed by Brian Mylon. To July 1

Adelaide Theatre: *The Brains*, designed by George Fongshar. Directed by Frank Hamer. To June 10

Shores by Sophocles. Directed by Frank Hamer. From June 13

NATIONAL THEATRE (24 8121)

Whitmore Musical Theatre production: *Let's Have a Show*. June 1-15

PILGRIM PUPPET THEATRE (260 6000)

After the Revolution, adapted by Ben Cooper, director, Robert Adams

PRINCESS THEATRE (261 2911)

The Victorian State Opera Company presents: *Macbeth*. June 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 1

THEATRE JOHN'S THEATRE LOUNGE (62 1754)

Old Time Music Hall. John & Tilda Newman, Myrtle Roberts. Via Gordon Ties. Sat

Footprints. Director: Tony Morris. Brian Williams, Betty Cameron, Allen, Alan, David, Ben, Sam

VICTORIAN STATE OPERA (261 2911)

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Dear Orogen Director Tony Nichols June 1
July 1

HOLE IN THE WALL (281 3403)
Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett Director
Mike Morris June 1 28
Hole in the Phloxy workshop production
Moko, Dick Reinhardt by David Wright
Director Damien Jamieson June 28 July 1

NATIONAL THEATRE (212 3569)
Playhouse
A Stranger Named David by Trevor
Williams Director Stephen Berry May 31
June 28
A Pappa and Nolly Christmas by John
O'Donoghue June 28 July 22
Carriacoon
Miss Jahn by August Strindberg From May and
continuing

REGAL THEATRE (281 1507)
Big Bear Motel Director Paul Elliot, with Eric
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